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Editorial

Letter to a Young Writer

Dear Henry James Joyce Junior,

NOTHING pleases me more than the idea that the 1950's might prove to be a decade when literature was given a new start by the literary reviews: John Lehmann's *The London Magazine*, *Encounter*, smaller ones like *Chance* and *Nimbus*, and then, of course, your own *Oxbridge and Redbrick Review*, exclusively for "young" writers (all manuscripts to be accompanied by the author's Birth Certificate is, you tell me, the rule).

"Nice, but why should you have anything to do with a 'Revival'?" you ask. "You belong to an outmoded *avant-garde*. . . . Your era is prehistoric if not totally mythical. It is an age of Dragons I heard about in the nursery—'Hitler and Mussolini in their wooing poses'—whom you rode out on sawdust horses to fight with poetico-political manifestoes. You spoiled such phrases as you had by dipping them in pink ink. Moreover, now you can't even make up your mind whether you were fighting the right dragon. So you bore us by post-datedly revising your old alliances, discovering that enemies were friends and friends enemies, and mentioning that which to us is the most tabu word in your outmoded vocabulary—politics."

Well, dear Henry, tell me who your group are and what they stand for and I shall try to keep a White List. To which you reply:

"That's typical of your out-of-date point of view. When I insist on ages, you ask for names. Well, I am very amiable, I shall oblige. There's Doris Baxter; there's Tom Culham; there's Jeremy Winning; and, of course, there's Xan Xanadu, the critic, down from Cambridge, a year at Sewanee, and now at Reading."

But, dear Henry, Miss Baxter writes translucent nature poetry, that of Somervillians in *Oxbridge Poetry, 1928*; Mr. Culham manages well enough Arnold Bennett's own genial French realism adapted to dramatise the Five Towns; Mr. Winning writes about the house parties, meets, nannies, and copulations of leisured, rich people who call one another "darling" (I had thought *them* even more extinct than *us*); as for Mr. Xan Xanadu, he lectures on the Third Programme about "correctitude," "decorum," and "influences."

You protest: "I was being altogether too tolerant when I pandered to you by mentioning names. Incapable of anything but political manœuvre, you naturally lead the argument into irrelevancies. The simple point I was trying to make is that there are, indisputably, the young. Ask the authorities, and they will tell you there are many people aged between twenty and twenty-five. Some of them write, and we expect you to publish these. Who they are has nothing to do with it."

Well, I shall study with ever-increasing attention the manuscripts of young writers.

I EXPECTED that, when I grew old, my hair would go white, my teeth fall out, my waistline expand, etc. All this has happened. I had also expected to be left several generations behind in the March of the Century. For I realise that nowadays there is a new generation every five years. How can this not be so, when anyone's forgotten youth is literally prehistoric to someone else twenty years his junior? To a recruit of 1939, a recruit of 1918 was using methods and thinking thoughts discarded by evolution, and to twenty-year-olds today, the Battle of Britain is a period that has to be "mugged up." As for the Thirties! . . .

Well, I realised all this, but where I was wrong was in not anticipating that the young don't necessarily have the attributes I connected

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with being young. I thought that to be young meant having new ideas, being "advanced," experimenting. I thought of the young as supporting, in the arts, modern movements which released the mind from an industrialised environment by developing an idiom of the modern city. To me, the young were those who gave their life-blood to the struggle which was carried on under names such as "interior monologue," "revolution of the word," and surrealism.

Thus—should I be ashamed to confess it, dear Henry?—the young of this century seemed to me those who followed the men of genius with the largest imaginative digestions: James Joyce, who crammed the night and day of Dublin into the heads of Leopold Bloom and Stephen Daedalus; the early Eliot, whose *Preludes* and *The Waste Land* include an experience of urban civilisation implying Spengler and Toynbee; Apollinaire, who measured his sensual body and his gay intelligence against the guns of the Western Front; D. H. Lawrence, who thought he could change civilisation by creating the pattern of a more instinctual relation between the sexes.

So to my way of thinking youth was not just "being young." Youth was measured by one's capacity to develop a contemporary mind and sensibility. The idea of "new writing" was to express a modern experience from some centre where the individual sense of life provided all-important values whereby to judge the modern world.

If one looks at it like this, youth has been a diminishing commodity since about 1910. The gay 1920's were too cynical for the young to go in for that heroic translation of all externals into interior thought which Joyce or Rilke managed to achieve; the 1930's were sidetracked into politics because the basic material conditions which made an anti-materialist art possible were threatened; the surrealists were indeed brave, and regained much youth, but at the price of surrendering conscious intellectual control of their material.

Maybe, dear Henry, I am not writing about youth at all, but about a modern movement, now outmoded, which has previously enlisted the support of the young, even when they were appealed to, say, from the deathbed of Lawrence or out of the old age of Yeats. "Youth," you now protest, "is nothing else but being twenty or twenty-five rather than forty or sixty; what the old should learn from the young is that what they, the young, are not interested in, is no longer significant."

So perhaps, dear Henry, the old have no right to expect the young to be modern.

We can, however, ask them to avoid having the souls of officials, whose ranks extend not only through the bureaucracy but also through the universities and among the austerest critics.

As I see it, larger and larger areas of life are today becoming paralysed by conformity. Those who accept conformity do not challenge the existence of a mass-producing, mass-consuming society, even though they refuse its values. No one tries any more to be a Rilke or a Joyce, digesting the whole of his experience into inner life, where it becomes, as it were, liquescent, and capable of being moulded into the pattern of a new civilisation. Perhaps this abandonment of a task is ultimately due to politics; for today no one imagines that anything but politics can accomplish change, and political changes always strengthen the materialism of the age.

It is difficult not to be an official. And I would be sentimentally out of date to look to you to revolt—to become an exile like Joyce, a rebel like Van Gogh, a solitary like Rilke. You may have to join the bureaucracy, have a post or job, and undermine officialdom, with your corruscating spirit, from within. Probably you understand this and are doing so already, in which case this letter is unnecessary. Possibly, dear Henry, you are pulling my leg when you appear to think that there is any virtue for its own sake in merely being young. It may be your cleverness to pretend this.

Stephen Spender

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J. R. Ackerley

My Dog, Tulip

SOME years ago, when I was walking with my dog in Fulham Palace Gardens, we overtook an old woman who was wheeling a perambulator. She was chatting cheerfully to the occupant of it, and it was therefore, perhaps, unreasonable of me to be surprised to find, when I caught up with her, that this too was a dog. He was lying upon his back, propped up by pillows and with a rug tucked round his middle; just above the top of the rug the edge of a thick bandage was visible. Very comfortable and peaceful the little dog looked as the old woman trundled him along among the flowers, chatting to him in that bright, encouraging way in which people address invalids.

I made some sympathetic remark to her as I passed, and she was all agog to tell me about her troubles, how the poor little dog had been so seriously ill with an internal tumour, but how he was well on the road to recovery now, thanks, oh thanks—she could not thank her enough—to the wonderful lady vet who had operated on him and been so clever and so kind, for had it not been for her, the little dog, who was such a good little dog, would undoubtedly have died.

"Wouldn't you, love?" said she to the invalid, who lay back motionless against the pillows, with his paws folded on his stomach and a very solemn expression on his small, pointed face.

This conversation made a deep impression upon me. I was then quite new to the dog world, for my present dog was the first I had ever possessed, and there was much that I did not know and wished to learn. It astounded me to hear that dogs underwent major operations and had their stomachs opened and shut as we do, and I tried to picture this little mongrel lying upon the operating table, under the glare of the head-lamps, with the grave faces of surgeons, nurses, and anæsthetists bent over him. What on earth would happen to my dog, I wondered uneasily, if she should ever develop anything so serious as an internal tumour. Who would care to operate on her? Before parting from the old woman, I did not fail to take the name and address of the lady vet who had been "so clever and so kind."

MY own dog is an Alsatian bitch. Her name is Tulip. Alsatians have a bad reputation; they are said to bite the hand that feeds them. Indeed Tulip bit my hand once, but accidentally; she mistook it for a rotten apple we were both trying to grab simultaneously. One of her canines sank into my thumb-joint to the bone: when I held it under the tap afterwards I could see the sinews exposed. We all make mistakes and she was dreadfully sorry. She rolled over on the grass with all her legs in the air; and, later on, when she saw the bandage on my hand, she put herself in the corner, the darkest corner of the bedroom, and stayed there for the rest of the afternoon. One can't do more than that.

But if you look like a wild beast you are expected to behave like one; and human beings, who tend to disregard the savagery of their own conduct, shake their heads over the Alsatian dog "What can you expect of a wolf?" they say.

Tulip made no conspicuous effort to improve this situation. If people were inclined to look at her askance she gave them every reason to do so. They distrusted her; she suspected them. In fact she repudiated the human race altogether—that is to say the remainder of it. *I* could do with her whatever I wished—except

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stop her barking at other people. In this matter, she seemed to say, she knew better than I. Yet she behaved always with exemplary dignity and good breeding wherever she went, so long as she was let alone: it was when anyone approached her, or even gave the impression of being about to approach her, that she spoke her mind. She spoke sharply and loud, and she had a good deal to say, though what precisely her mind was I did not know. In truth, although I was very anxious to know, I was less anxious to find out. Her sweetness and gentleness to myself were such that it was almost impossible for me to believe that these were not the prevailing characteristics of her nature; but the language she used to others certainly sounded pretty strong, and bad language, as is well known, does not always stop at that.

No doubt the reason why I took the constant care I did take to prevent her from being put to the test of showing how far she would go, was that I had to admit that I had an inkling; but the two bus-conductors and the postman whom she had already bitten could hardly be accepted as a true sociological sample of her feelings for mankind. They had all been doing things, like moving soundlessly about in plimsolls, of which it is in the nature of dogs to disapprove; in any case, she had not hurt them, but merely taken them by the sleeve or by the arm; and though one of the bus-conductors had rolled back his cuff to display the wound, he himself seemed disappointed to find that there was nothing to be seen but a small white dent in his flesh.

When children are called difficult the cause is often traced to their homes, and it was upon Tulip's first home that I blamed her unsociable conduct. She had originally belonged to some working-class people who, though fond of her in their way, seldom took her out. She was too excitable, and too valuable, to be allowed off the lead; on it she pulled. For nearly a year she never left their house at all, but spent her time, mostly alone, for they were at work all day, in a tiny back-yard. She could hardly be expected, therefore, to learn the ways of a world she so rarely visited; the only "training" she ever received was an occasional thrashing for the destruction which her owners discovered when they returned home. Alsatians in particular do not take kindly to beatings; they are too intelligent and too nervous. It was from this life, when she was eighteen months old, that I rescued her, and to it that I attributed the disturbances of her psyche. Thereafter it was clear that if she could have her way, she would never let me out of her sight again.

It is necessary to add that she is beautiful. People are always wanting to stroke her, a thing she cannot bear. Her ears are tall and pointed, like the ears of Anubis. How she manages to hold them constantly erect, as though starched, I do not know, for with their fine covering of mouse-grey fur they are soft and flimsy; when she stands with her back to the sun it shines through the delicate tissue, so that they glow shell-pink as though incandescent. Her face also is long and pointed, basically stone-grey but the snout and lower jaw are jet-black. Jet, too, are the rims of her tawny eyes, as though heavily mascara'd, and the tiny, mobile eye-brow tufts that are set like accents above them. And in the midst of her forehead is a kind of Indian caste-mark, a black diamond suspended there, like the jewel on the brow of Pegasus in Mantegna's "Parnassus," by a fine dark thread, no more than a pencilled line, which is drawn from it right over her poll midway between the tall ears. A shadow extends across her forehead from either side of this caste-mark, so that, in certain lights, the diamond looks like the body of a bird with its wings spread, a bird in flight.

These dark markings symmetrically divide up her face into zones of pale pastel colours, like a mosaic, or a stained-glass window; her skull, bisected by the thread, is two primrose pools, the centre of her face light grey, the bridge of her nose above the long, black lips fawn, her cheeks white, and upon each a *patte de mouche* has been tastefully set. A delicate white ruff, frilling out from the lobes of her ears, frames this strange, clownish face, with its heavily leaded features, and covers the whole of her throat and chest with a snowy shirt-front.

For the rest, her official description is sable-grey: she is a grey dog wearing a sable tunic·

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Her grey is the grey of birch-bark; her sable tunic is of the texture of satin and clasps her long body like a saddle-cloth. No tailor could have shaped it more elegantly; it is cut round the joints of her shoulders and thighs and in a straight line along the points of her ribs, lying open at the chest and stomach. Over her rump it fits like a cap, and then extends on in a thin strip over the top of her long tail down to the tip. Viewed from above, therefore, she is a black dog; but when she rolls over on her back she is a grey one. Two dark ribbons of fur, descending from her tunic over her shoulders, fasten it to her at her sternum, which seems to clip the ribbons together as with an ivory brooch.

SHE had been to three vets already for various reasons. It was a measure of my naïvety in dog affairs that my first consultation with a vet was to enquire whether she was in heat. The question was never settled, that is to say by him, for when he was finally able to make himself heard, in his bleak surgery, above her deafening challenge and my own vain exhortations to her to calm herself, all he said, in a cold voice, was, "Have you any control over your dog?"

In the face of the evidence it seemed idle to return anything but "No"; to which, still keeping his distance, he drily replied, "Then take her out of my surgery at once."

Some weeks later she sustained a small cut in one of her pads, which took so long to heal that I began to fear that it would never heal at all; another vet had been recommended to me, and I decided to try my luck with him. He was an ex-Colonel of the R.A.V.C., and the most that I asked of Tulip on this occasion was that she should allow me to flex her paw so that, without touching her, he could glance at the cut. But she would not permit even that. Having failed, as I had failed, to humour her or shout her down, the Colonel suddenly lost his temper, and exclaiming, "These Alsatians! They're all the same!" he swooped upon her and beat her about the body with his hands.

These dashing military tactics were not without effect; they drove her, trembling with astonishment and fear, beneath his operating table, from the shelter of which she looked out at him with an expression which I might secretly excuse but could not approve; but they did not enable him to examine her, if that was part of his plan, and they could hardly be construed as an invitation to call again. They implied also, I took it, a rebuke to myself, as well as the more obvious one they meted out to her; they were teaching me a much-needed lesson in how to discipline an unruly dog: "Spare the rod and spoil the child!" was what the Colonel was, in effect, saying.

As I walked away from this establishment with Tulip, who was now in her gayest and most winning mood, I supposed myself to be in possession of an undoctorable dog; but this gloomy reflection was succeeded by two others of a more comforting nature. The first was that, after all, she hadn't bitten the Colonel. And he might truly be said to have asked for that. Flinging caution to the winds, he had set about her; but she had not retaliated: whatever savagery had been exhibited in the surgery had not been exhibited by her. My other reflection was, in one way, even more comforting. "These Alsatians! They're all the same!" he had said. Tulip, then, was not exceptional in her tiresomeness. She was not, so to speak, a delinquent dog. If all Alsatians were the same, her peculiarities were of the breed and not an individual affair. But if all Alsatians were the same, did any of them ever receive medical attention?

It transpired that they did; and above all the conflicting emotions that rent me when we visited our third vet—this time for a most important service, to have her inoculated against distemper—was gratitude that he did not summon the police or the fire-brigade. I had made the appointment by telephone, and had thought it politic to apologise for Tulip in advance and to explain that, although I did not believe there was really any harm in her, she was not the most amenable of patients. To this the vet had merely grunted: when I set out with her I was already unnerved by the thought of the struggle that lay ahead. Nor were my drooping spirits raised by the first sight that greeted us, a spaniel who was being treated as we arrived. This creature was visible

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to us, like some callous admonishment, before ever we reached the door, for the window of the surgery looked out upon a yard through which we had to pass, and the spaniel was all too plainly seen within.

He was standing quietly on a table with a thermometer sticking out of his bottom, like a cigarette. And this humiliating spectacle was rendered all the more crushing by the fact that there was no one else there. Absolutely motionless, and with an air of deep absorption, the dog was standing upon the table in an empty room with a thermometer in his bottom, almost as though he had put it there himself.

"Oh, Tulip!" I groaned. "If only you were like that!"

But she was not. When the vet returned from his dispensary and, the thermometer and the spaniel having been successively removed, was free to turn his attention to us, she was not in the least like that. Suspecting the place's character, no doubt, from the pervasive odour of medicaments and the howls and moans of the various sick animals penned in the kennel at the back, she had exhibited the strongest aversion from entering it, and was now imploring and cajoling me to take her away: as soon as the vet opened his mouth to speak, she replied. A grey little man with an unsmiling face, he stood with his syringe in his hand patiently waiting while I petted and coaxed poor Tulip, speaking soothingly to her in baby language, as she shrank, dribbled, and barked between my knees.

"Can you turn her back to me and hold her head still?" he enquired, in a momentary lull.

"I think so," I said nervously.

But to turn her back on this odious little man was the last thing that Tulip intended; she squirmed convulsively out of my grasp over and over again, eventually wrenching her head out of her collar. Under the vet's expressionless gaze I had to retrieve her and rebuckle it, with hands which, he probably noticed, shook as much as she did.

"May I give her the injection myself?" I asked. "You could show me where to do it, and she wouldn't mind it from me."

The vet made no reply. Instead, he laid his syringe upon the table, rang the bell, selected a strip of bandage from a hook on the wall and made a loop in it—all without a word. The door opened, and an assistant came in.

"Good!" exclaimed the vet to me, with sudden briskness. "Now just keep her head like that for a moment!" and advancing the loop towards Tulip, who was still determinedly pointing her face at him, and now glared at the approaching contraption as though hypnotised, he abruptly noosed her nose, with what was plainly the dexterity of long practice, drew her jaws tightly and roughly together, turned the ends of the tape round her throat and knotted them behind her ears.

"Oh, I say!" I cried. "Don't hurt her! There's really no need."

I was, indeed, in no position, or even mind, to question whatever methods this busy and helpful man might think fit to employ to exercise over my animal the control I lacked, and my miserable ejaculation was only wrung from me by the sight of Tulip's horror-stricken face and the squawk of pain and despair she uttered before her powers of speech were cut rudely short.

My thoughts, in fact, were in the utmost confusion. I suffered to see my dear, affectionate dog ill-used, but I could hardly expect my tender feelings to be shared by a vet who was meeting her for the first time and clearly did not bring out in her, like myself, the sweetest and the best. What should I do, I pondered, if I were in his shoes, confronted with a strange, large, vulpine, and unfriendly dog, possessed of an excellent set of teeth, into whom I was asked to stick a needle? Would I cheerfully grasp her with hands upon the wholeness of which my means of livelihood depended? Yet, on the other side, could it be good for a creature, already so nervous and mistrustful, to be subjected to such violent stratagems?

However, for all the attention the vet paid me, I might never have spoken. "Now, Bob!" was all he said, and, brushing me aside, he and his assistant took hold of the now defenceless Tulip, who was foaming at the mouth with terror, and pulling her legs from beneath her, brought her heavily to the ground.

"Pass the syringe," said the vet.

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AFTER this, my ambition in life was to keep Tulip in such a state of health that she need never visit a vet again. It was an ambition which she herself appeared to share. She would not, if she could help it, even enter the streets in which her last two experiences had taken place. If I happened to forget and turned down one of them when we were out, I would suddenly miss her from my side, an unheard-of thing, and looking wildly round, would espy her far behind me, motionless at the corner, staring after me with her exclamation-mark face. There is no getting away from Tulip's face; with its tall ears constantly focused upon one it exacts an attention which it seems unremittingly to give. She fixes one, as one is sometimes claimed and fixed by those insistent people who, when they have something to impart, hold one's gaze with a searching, inescapable stare, as though they know from experience that the attention of their listeners is apt to wander and are determined to exact that responsive gleam of intelligence that their remorseless personalities require. "Are you listening?" they say, irritably or plaintively, from time to time.

Tulip's face perpetually said the same thing, for with all its perpendicular lines, the tall ears, the long nose, the black streak down the forehead and the little vertical eye-brow tufts, it was not merely interrogatory but exclamatory also: it said both "What?" and "What!" Useless to call her now, she would not budge; I would have to return to her and reach my objective by another route; but later I discovered that she would consent to follow me down these unsavoury roads so long as I reassured her, by passing the surgeries, that it was not my intention to enter them. Then she would come, but always with infinite distaste, crossing the road to make the widest possible detour and hurrying past the baleful buildings, casting at them every now and then a repugnant, sidelong glance.

But my disinclination to visit vets was in frequent conflict with my need to consult them; perplexities of all sorts troubled my ignorant and anxious mind, and not the least of my worries at the time of my encounter with the old woman in Fulham Palace Gardens, was that, in spite of the nourishing food I provided, Tulip looked too thin; beneath her sable tunic all her ribs were visible. The distressing word "Worms" was dropped into my ear by a kind acquaintance, and soon afterwards I decided to take her along to see Miss Canvey, which was the name of the lady vet who had been "so clever and so kind." Her surgery was in Parsons Green, and to the kennel-maid who answered the phone I explained, in the apologetic manner that was now habitual with me, that my bitch was very difficult and that I would prefer, if convenient, to bring her along out of surgery hours.

Miss Canvey was a short, thickset, young woman with bobbed hair, spectacles, and a homely peasant's face. She wore a white overall, not intimidatingly clean, and as she advanced across the large, bare room towards me, I took an impression of calmness and competence. I had spoken sternly to Tulip as we waited, exhorting her to good behaviour for a change; but I had no expectation of any improvement and there was none; she accorded Miss Canvey her usual defiant reception—defiance which became the more emphatic the more it was ignored. Miss Canvey approached imperturbably, and stood quietly in front of us, looking down at her, while I stumbled through some account of Tulip's past and present troubles, punctuated with irritable commands to the dog to pipe down.

"She's like this with everyone," I said ruefully, "but as sweet as pie to me. I can't make it out."

Miss Canvey did not speak for a moment, but continued to gaze down at the excited animal. Then she asked:

"What's her name?" I told her. "Well Tulip, you *are* a noisy girl, aren't you? What's it all about?" and she extended her hand, back foremost. Tulip paused for a moment to sniff it, then, as the hand was moved closer, retreated, barking more violently than ever. How maddening, how intolerable it was that this creature, usually so attentive and obedient to my wishes, should alway let me down in public in this stupid way! Suddenly yelling "Stop it, you brute!" I biffed her on the nose. The blow was harder than I intended. Tulip gave a little

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cry of pain and rubbed her nose with her paw. Then she rose up on her hind legs and gently licked my face.

"I see," said Miss Canvey promptly. "You're the trouble."

"I?" I exclaimed, astonished.

"Just slip the lead through her collar, will you. I'll examine her in another room."

"Are you sure it will be all right?" I asked anxiously, doing as I was bid.

"Perfectly all right." And twisting the lead round her strong wrist, she marched firmly out of the room, towing behind her the horrified and struggling Tulip who cast back at me agonised glances as she slid and sprawled across the linoleum. The door closed.

Alone in the surgery I listened apprehensively for sounds—screams from Miss Canvey, cries of pain or rage from Tulip, rushing feet, banging doors—sounds of any sort: none could be reassuring. But the place was as silent as the grave. Then, after what seemed an eternity but was only ten minutes, I heard a scuffling in the passage and a few barks, but of a very different timbre; the door opened and Tulip reappeared, this time with Miss Canvey in tow.

"No sign of worms," remarked the latter, dropping the lead. "She's in excellent condition."

"How did she behave?" I asked, while Tulip cast herself into my arms and lavished upon me a greeting more suitable in its extravagance to lovers who had been parted for years.

"Good as gold," said Miss Canvey.

"Did you tie up her nose?"

"Heavens, no! I never do that."

"But you had help?" I said, gazing mistily at her.

Miss Canvey smiled:

"Of course not. She was no trouble. I knew she wouldn't be."

"How did you know?" I asked humbly.

"Well, you learn by experience, I suppose. But it isn't difficult to tell a dog's character from its face. Tulip's a good girl, I saw that at once. You're the trouble."

I sat down.

"Do tell me," I said.

"Well, she's in love with you, that's obvious. And so life's full of worries for her. She has to protect you to begin with; that's why she's upset when people approach you: I expect she's a bit jealous, too. But in order to protect you she's naturally got to be free; that's why she doesn't like other people touching her; she's afraid, you see, that they may take hold of her and deprive her of her freedom to guard you. That's all the fuss is about, I should say. It's you she's thinking of. But when you're not there, there's nothing for her to do, of course, and no anxiety. Anyone can handle her then, I'm sure. That's all," she concluded with a smile. "Dogs aren't difficult to understand. One has to put oneself in their position."

Miss Canvey could have put herself in any position she wished, for I was already her slave and gazed at her with the veneration with which we behold a saint. I asked her some questions about Tulip's diet, paid the fee—half-a-crown, so far as I recall, was all that this miracle cost—and took my leave. As I was going, she suddenly said:

"Why do you shout at her?"

"I don't know," I stammered, rather taken aback. "She exasperates me sometimes. She doesn't seem to hear what I say."

"She can hear a pin drop!" said Miss Canvey briefly. "Look at her ears!" Then on a milder note: "Try not to. It's bad for her. She's very highly strung. Speak to her quietly; she'll do anything you want in time."

As we walked away I apologised to Tulip for hitting her on her beautiful nose, and, in my thoughts, for much else besides. In the light of Miss Canvey's interpretation, how infinitely more hideous that abject struggle in the last vet's surgery now seemed, how heroic her conduct, how mean and contemptible mine. I had apologised for her devotion, and then betrayed it. I recollected, with a shudder, how I had held her head still for the approaching trap. I felt very tender towards her.

After this, we may be said almost to have lived in the surgery of dear Miss Canvey, that Florence Nightingale of the animal world. I walked Tulip over to see her on any pretext,

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however trifling, and such was the confidence she inspired that very soon I no longer bothered to make special appointments, but dropped in during surgery hours and sat with Tulip in the crowded room awaiting our turn and watching wonderful Miss Canvey at work upon a miscellaneous assortment of sick dogs, cats, rabbits, and poultry. It was an enthralling and uplifting spectacle, and though her white overalls became less and less white, and her bobbed hair more and more disordered, she never lost that air of calm authority which it was a positive tonic to breathe. That Tulip ever enjoyed these visits as much as I did, I cannot pretend; but my own freedom from anxiety no doubt affected her too; what resistance she put up seemed more perfunctory, and once inside, she sat by my knee quietly, except for an occasional mew of impatience, until her turn came. Then, of course, when the solid little figure of Miss Canvey approached us, she put on her act, though with less of the old conviction; with a genial word of welcome, Miss Canvey simply took the lead and towed her from the room.

One day I observed among the other pilgrims to this shrine a young working man with his Collie dog, which was muzzled. Miss Canvey was busily engaged in extracting a tintack from the anus of a hen, and it was some time before she noticed him. Then she called across the room:

"Why is your dog muzzled?"

"I don't trust 'im, Miss," said the young man, blushing.

"Take it off," said Miss Canvey.

She always spoke quietly, though sometimes, as now, rather abruptly; no one ever thought of disobeying her, and the young man complied. When his turn came she examined his dog with her usual coolness and thoroughness; then she took the young man aside and spoke earnestly to him in a corner. I could not catch what she said, but at the end of it he smiled and murmured "Thank you, Miss." Then he went off with his dog, carrying the muzzle in his hand.

While this little scene was being enacted, I happened to be sitting near the desk where Miss Canvey's kennel-maid was writing out prescriptions, and leaning over, I whispered to her:

"Has Miss Canvey ever been bitten?"

The kennel-maid looked cautiously round before replying; then she said, in a low, hesitant voice:

"Well, she has once, to my knowledge; but I don't think she'd like it known."

"Please tell me," I said.

"I didn't actually see it happen," said the girl, "because I was busy with something else; but I heard a sort of scuffle—it was another Collie she was treating, too—and saw her go quickly out of the room holding her hand. When she returned she had a bandage on her wrist, but she went back to finish what she'd been doing. I said. 'Did he bite you?' but all she said, rather shortly, was 'It was my fault. I was clumsy.' And though I offered to take over the case from her, and so did Mr. Mather when he got to hear of it, she would never let anyone else handle the dog all the time he was ill. He never hurt her again, and they became very good friends in the end."

"Sublime woman!" I said.

The kennel-maid smiled:

"She's fond of animals, and so they like and trust her. All animals, but specially horses. They're what she likes best."

ALAS, it was true. She loved horses more than dogs, and so I have to speak of her in the past tense, for after we had enjoyed less than a year of her ministrations, her true love galloped her away into a country practice. Happy the horses wherever she is! But my own spirits went into the deepest mourning. Miss Canvey herself, I think, experienced a certain sense of guilt at abandoning us. Looking into my downcast face for the last time, she said:

"I'm not exceptional, you know."

"You are to me," I said, with a sigh.

Flushing a little, she said firmly:

"You can tell any vet from me that Tulip is perfectly all right. But she must always be examined away from you. It's you who cause the trouble. Tell them that. She's a nervous bitch, and you make her more nervous. But when you're out of the way anyone can handle her. You can tell them all that from me."

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Then she uttered the last words I was ever to hear from her lips, and which, although I was too stunned by the sickening blow they dealt me to take in their full implication at the time, afforded me, in retrospect, a glimpse, the most revealing I ever had, into the depths of her heart. Fixing me with a significant look, she said:

"Never let anyone feed Tulip but yourself!"

Dear Miss Canvey, she was a romantic, of course; yet with her rather matter-of-fact air of sturdy capability she managed to convey a quite different impression, and it was only after she had gone that I was able to perceive how profoundly romantic she was. Indeed, if she had stayed, I might never have perceived it at all, for how should I have known that the two different dogs that she insisted upon my possessing, the Tulip who lived always at my side, and that other Tulip with whom she had made herself privately familiar, were, to all intents and purposes, the same? This concept of hers, in fact, that I was guarded by an unapproachable tigress who became, in my absence, the meekest of lambs, had almost everything to recommend it; it worked and it pleased; it enchanted me, and so far as Miss Canvey herself was concerned, it appealed, I feel sure, to something so deep in her nature that I believe she might have gone to almost any lengths to keep the two Tulips apart. Moreover, a bewitching air of mystery enwrapped it; a transformation rite had to be performed, with Miss Canvey as High Priestess, and an act of faith was required on both sides; for just as I could never know Miss Canvey's Tulip excepting by repute, since she existed only in my absence, so it was an essential part of Miss Canvey's programme that she also must take—or rather leave—my Tulip for granted.

This may sound fanciful; but how else can her last terrible injunction be explained unless on the grounds that she wished to perpetuate the romantic situation which she herself had created and cherished, and which, she divined, satisfied in me, too, some profound psychological need? How truly those last insidious words found their mark! For I could not feed Tulip myself! I was too busy, and such offices, as Miss Canvey herself knew, were already in process of being delegated to a housekeeper, lately engaged for the purpose. Had I made a ghastly mistake? Was I now about to lose my Tulip, that savage lover and protector whom Miss Canvey had striven so hard to preserve for me intact? Should I find myself soon with Miss Canvey's Tulip, that reduced, spiritless, abject creature, anybody's stroke, while my housekeeper enjoyed the fierce flattery of mine? That this obsessive fear haunted my life for many months was proof enough how well Miss Canvey had sized me up. But—she would be the first to rejoice—she had not sized up Tulip. Indeed, how should human beings suspect in the lower beasts those noblest virtues which they themselves attain only in the realms of fiction? Tulip was incorruptible. She was constant. It mattered not who fed, flattered, or befriended her, or for how long; her allegiance never wavered; she had given her heart to me in the beginning, and mine, and mine only, it was to remain for ever.

Miss Canvey therefore underrated her, and it was left to Mr. Brasenose of Brighton to whom I next had recourse for veterinary aid—Tulip's nails needed cutting—to imply that she had overrated her too. Mr. Brasenose was a cheerful young man who whistled while he worked, who continued to whistle, indeed, throughout Tulip's customary hostilities, and when I had recited to him Miss Canvey's magic formula, which I had learnt by heart, all he said was:

"Oh, I shouldn't bother to go. I expect Tulip would prefer you to stay."

This was so far from being an aspect of the matter that had occurred to me, that it needed a moment or two to take it in; by the time that I had focused it and, as it seemed to me, its total and reckless wrongheadedness, he had got his clippers out and was saying "Just hoist her on the table, will you?" in so casual a manner, as though she were a sack, that I found myself complying. The operation was not performed without difficulty; Mrs. Brasenose, indeed, had to be summoned by her husband from an inner apartment to help me prop Tulip up on the table and retrieve those various portions of her anatomy which, like the fringes of

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a jelly on too small a plate, kept escaping over the edge; but at any rate it was performed, by the merrily trilling vet, and with as little concern for Tulip's protests and struggles as if he had been cutting the nails of a mouse.

Thus opened another chapter in Tulip's medical history, and the last; although I continued faithfully to repeat my formula to all the vets we subsequently visited, none of them paid to it the least attention. This strange heedlessness upset me at first; not on their account, of course; if they chose to ignore Miss Canvey's advice, that was their look out; but was it fair to Tulip to impose on her this additional strain of worrying about me when she had trouble enough of her own? Upon reflection, however, I was less sure; since the ruling passion of her life was to keep me always in her eye, might she not actually prefer me to stay?

Moreover, this new chapter, I gradually perceived, had one considerable advantage; it shed light upon the problem which had embarrassed my public life with Tulip from the start, and which Miss Canvey had deliberately left unexplored: What was my Tulip really like? How far, in my presence, would she go? It turned out that she was Miss Canvey's Tulip —that is to say, "as good as gold." This was what I had always believed, and what Miss Canvey herself had seemed to confirm when she said that she saw at a glance that Tulip was a "good girl"—leaving, however, unclear in my mind to what lengths, in Miss Canvey's philosophy, a good girl might be permitted to go in defence of her man, or her horse.

Tulip was a good girl; but as I went on hoisting her up on to one surgery table after another and supporting her there while the vets took swabs of her womb, or, opening her scissor-like jaws with their bare hands, rammed yards of stomach-pump piping down her throat, I experienced, besides gratitude and admiration for her self-restraint, a kind of nostalgia for the past. Life was becoming dull and prosaic; something had gone out of it with dear Miss Canvey, some enrichment, some fine flavour. And this, I then knew, was the very knowledge from which, in her wisdom, she had sought to protect me: the death of the legend, the disillusionment of the heart. My Tulip: had it not now to be admitted that she had been seen through, that her bluff had been called, her stature reduced? No tigress she, but—must I face it?—an ordinary dog. Was it not even possible that, in course of time, under these civilising processes, she would become so tame, so characterless, so commonplace, that she might one day be found standing in a surgery alone with a thermometer in her bottom?

Tulip never let me down. She is nothing if not consistent. She knows where to draw the line, and it is always in the same place, a circle round us both. Indeed she is a good girl, but—and this is the point—she would not care for it to be generally known. So wherever Miss Canvey may be—jogging, I hope, down some leafy lane upon a steed who will let no one mount him but herself—I would like her to know that Tulip is still the kind of good girl of whom she would approve. When, therefore, the little local boys ask me, as they often do, in their respectful and admiring way, though mistaking Tulip's gender:

"Does he bite, Mister?"

I always return the answer which she, and Miss Canvey, would wish me to give.

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Theodore Roethke

Words for the Wind

I

Love, love, a lily's my care,
She's sweeter than a tree.
Loving, I use the air
Most lovingly: I breathe;
Mad in the wind I wear
Myself as I should be.
All's even with the odd,
My brother the vine is glad.

Are flower and seed the same?
What do the great dead say?
Sweet Phoebe, she's my theme:
She sways whenever I sway.
"O love me while I am,
You green thing in my way!"
I cried, and the birds came down
And made my song their own.

Motion can keep me still:
She kissed me out of thought
As a lovely substance will;
She wandered; I did not:
I stayed, and light fell
Across her pulsing throat;
I stared, and a garden stone
Slowly became the moon.

The shallow stream runs slack;
The wind creaks slowly by;
Out of a nestling's beak
Comes a tremulous cry
I cannot answer back;
A shape from deep in the eye,
That woman I saw in a stone,
Keeps pace when I walk alone.

II

The sun declares the earth;
The stones leap in the stream;
On a wide plain, beyond
The far stretch of a dream,
A field breaks like the sea;
The wind's white with her name,
And I walk with the wind.

The dove's my will today.
She sways, half in the sun:
Rose, easy on a stem,
One with the sighing vine,
One to be merry with,
And pleased to meet the moon.
She likes wherever I am.

Passion's enough to give
Shape to a random joy:
I cry delight: I know
The root, the core of a cry.
Swan-heart, arbutus-calm,
She moves when time is shy:
Love has a thing to do.

The loam gleams like wet coal;
The green, the springing green
Makes an intenser day
Under the rising moon;
I smile, no mineral man;
I bear, but not alone,
The burden of this joy.

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III

UNDER a southern wind,
The birds and fishes move
North, in a single stream;
The sharp stars swing around;
I get a step beyond
The wind, and there I am;
I'm odd and full of love.
Wisdom, where is it found?—
Those who embrace, believe.
Whatever was, still is,
Says a song tied to a tree.
Below, on the ferny ground,
In rivery air, at ease,
I walk with my true love.

What time's my hear? I care.
I cherish what I have
Had of the temporal:
I am no longer young
But the winds and waters are;
What falls away will fall;
All things bring me to love.

IV

THE breath of a long root,
The shy perimeter
Of the unfolding rose,
The green, the altered leaf,
The oyster's weeping foot,
And the incipient star,—
Are part of what she is.
She wakes the ends of life.

Being myself, I sing
The soul's immediate joy.
Light, light, where's my repose?
A wind wreathes round a tree.
A thing is done: a thing
Body and spirit know
When I do what she does:
Creaturely creature, she!—

I kiss her moving mouth,
Her swart hilarious skin;
She breaks my breath in half;
She frolicks like a beast;
And I dance round and round,
A fond and foolish man,
And see and suffer myself
In another being, at last.

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Robert Warshow

The Gentleman with a Gun

They that have power to hurt and will do none,
That do not do the thing they most do show,
Who, moving others, are themselves as stone,
Unmoved, cold and to temptation slow;
They rightly do inherit heaven's graces,
And husband nature's riches from expense;
They are the lords and owners of their faces,
Others but stewards of their excellence.

THE two most successful creations of American movies are the gangster and the Westerner: men with guns. Guns as physical objects, and the postures associated with their use, form the visual and emotional centre of both types of films. I suppose this reflects the importance of guns in the fantasy life of Americans; but that is a less illuminating point than it appears to be.

The gangster movie, which no longer exists in its "classical" form, is a story of enterprise and success ending in precipitate failure. Success is conceived as an increasing power to work injury, it belongs to the city, and it is, of course, a form of evil (though the gangster's death, presented usually as "punishment," is perceived simply as defeat). The peculiarity of the gangster is his unceasing nervous activity. The exact nature of his enterprises may remain vague, but his commitment to enterprise is always clear, and all the more clear because he operates outside the field of utility. He is without culture, without manners, without leisure, or at any rate his leisure is likely to be spent in debauchery so compulsively aggressive as to seem only another aspect of his "work." But he is graceful, moving like a dancer among the crowded dangers of the city.

The gangster is lonely and melancholy, and can give the impression of a profound worldly wisdom. He is the "No" to that great American "Yes" which is stamped so big over the official culture and yet has so little to do with the way we Americans really feel about our lives. But the gangster's loneliness and melancholy are not "authentic"; like everything else that belongs to him, they are not honestly come by: he is lonely and melancholy not because life ultimately demands such feelings but because he has put himself in a position where everybody wants to kill him, and eventually somebody will. He is wide open and defenceless, incomplete because unable to accept any limits or come to terms with his own nature, fearful, loveless. And the story of his career is a nightmare inversion of the values of ambition and opportunity. From the window of Scarface's bullet-proof apartment can be seen an electric sign proclaiming: "The World is Yours," and, if I remember rightly, this sign is the last thing we see after Scarface lies dead in the street. In the end it is the gangster's weakness as much as his power and freedom that appeals to us; the world is not ours, but it is not his either, and in his death he "pays" for our fantasies, releasing us momentarily both from the concept of success, which he denies by caricaturing it, and from the need to succeed, which he shows to be dangerous.

The Western hero, by contrast, is a figure of repose. He resembles the gangster in being lonely and to some degree melancholy. But his melancholy comes from the "simple" recognition that life is unavoidably serious, not from the disproportions of his own temperament. And his loneliness is organic, not imposed on him by his situation but belonging to him intimately and testifying to his completeness. The gangster must reject others violently or draw them violently to him. The Westerner is not thus compelled to seek love; he is prepared to

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accept it, perhaps, but he never asks of it more than it can give, and we see him constantly in situations where love is at best an irrelevance. If there is a woman he loves, she is usually unable to understand his motives; she is against killing and being killed, and he finds it impossible to explain to her that there is no point in being "against" these things: they belong to his world. Very often this woman is from the East and her failure to understand represents a clash of cultures. In the American mind, refinement, virtue, civilisation, Christianity itself, are seen as feminine, and therefore women are often portrayed as possessing some kind of deeper wisdom, while the men, for all their apparent self-assurance, are fundamentally childish. But the West, lacking the graces of civilisation, is the place "where men are men"; in Western movies, men have the deeper wisdom and the women are children. Those women in the Western movies who share the hero's understanding of life are prostitutes (or, as they are usually presented, bar-room entertainers)—women, that is, who have come to understand in the most practical way how love can be an irrelevance, and are therefore "fallen" women.

The Westerner is *par excellence* a man of leisure. Even when he wears the badge of a marshal or, more rarely, owns a ranch, he appears to be unemployed. We see him standing at a bar, or playing poker—a game which expresses perfectly his talent for remaining relaxed in the midst of tension—or perhaps camping out on the plains on some extraordinary errand. If he does own a ranch, it is in the background; we are not actually aware that he owns anything except his horse, his guns, and the one worn suit of clothing which is likely to remain unchanged all through the movie. It comes as a surprise to see him take money from his pocket or an extra shirt from his saddle-bags. Yet it never occurs to us that he is a poor man; there is no poverty in Western movies, and really no wealth either: those great cattle domains and shipments of gold which figure so largely in the plots are moral and not material quantities, not the objects of contention but only its occasion. Possessions too are irrelevant.

Employment of some kind—usually unproductive—is always open to the Westerner, but when he accepts it, it is not because he needs to make a living, much less from any idea of "getting ahead." Where could he want to "get ahead" to? By the time we see him, he is already "there": he can ride a horse faultlessly, keep his countenance in the face of death, and draw his gun a little faster and shoot it a little straighter than anyone he is likely to meet. These are sharply defined acquirements, giving to the figure of the Westerner an apparent moral clarity which corresponds to the clarity of his physical image against his bare landscape; initially, at any rate, the Western movie presents itself as being without mystery, its whole "universe" comprehended in what we see on the screen.

MUCH of this apparent simplicity arises directly from those "cinematic" elements which have long been understood to give the Western theme its special appropriateness for the movies: the wide expanses of bare land, the free movement of men on horses. As guns constitute the visible moral centre of the Western movie, suggesting continually the possibility of violence, so land and horses represent the movie's material basis, its sphere of action. But the land and the horses have also a moral significance: the physical freedom they represent belongs to the moral "openness" of the West—corresponding to the fact that guns are carried where they can be seen. (And, as we shall see, the character of land and horses changes as the Western film becomes more complex.)

The gangster's world is less open, and his arts not so easily identifiable as the Westerner's. Perhaps he too can keep his countenance, but the mask he wears is really no mask: its purpose is precisely to make evident the fact that he desperately wants to "get ahead" and will stop at nothing. "Do it first," says Scarface, expounding his mode of operation, "and keep on doing it!" With the Westerner, it is a crucial point of honour *not* to "do it first"; his gun remains in its holster until the moment of combat. There is no suggestion, however, that he draws the gun reluctantly. The Westerner

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could not fulfil himself if the moment did not finally come when he can shoot his enemy down. But because that moment is so thoroughly the expression of his being, it must be kept pure. He will not violate the accepted forms of combat though by doing so he could save a city. And he can wait. "When you call me that—smile!"—the villain smiles weakly, soon he is laughing with horrible joviality, and the crisis is past. But it is allowed to pass because it must come again: sooner or later Trampas will "make his play," and the Virginian will be ready for him.

What does the Westerner fight for? We know he is on the side of justice and order, and, of course, it can be said he fights for these things. But such broad aims never correspond exactly to his real motives; they only offer him his opportunity. The Westerner himself, when an explanation is asked of him (usually by a woman), is likely to say that he does what he "has to do." If justice and order did not continually demand his protection, he would be without a calling. Indeed, we come upon him often in just that situation, as the reign of law settles over the West and he is forced to understand that his day is over; those are the pictures which end with his death or with his departure for some more remote frontier. What he defends, at bottom, is the purity of his own image—in fact his honour. He fights not for advantage and not for the right, but to state what he is, and he must live in a world which permits that statement. The Westerner is the last gentleman, and the movies which over and over again tell his story are probably the last art form in which the concept of honour retains its strength.

Of course, I do not mean to say that ideas of virtue and justice and courage have gone out of culture. Honour is more than these things: it is a style, concerned with harmonious appearances as much as with desirable consequences, and tending therefore towards the denial of life in favour of art. "Who hath it? he that died o' Wednesday." On the whole, a world that leans to Falstaff's view is a more civilised and even, finally, a more graceful world. It is just the march of civilisation that forces the Westerner to move on; and if we actually had to confront the question it might turn out that the woman who refuses to understand him is right as often as she is wrong. But we do not confront the question. Where the Westerner lives it is always about 1870—not the real 1870, either, or the real West—and he is killed or goes away when his position becomes problematical. The fact that he continues to hold our attention is evidence enough that, in his proper frame, he presents an image of personal nobility that is still real for us.

Clearly this image easily becomes ridiculous: we need only look at William S. Hart or Tom Mix who, in the wooden absoluteness of their virtue, represented little that an adult could take seriously. Some film enthusiasts claim to find in the early unsophisticated Westerns a "cinematic purity" that has since been lost; this idea is as valid, and finally as misleading, as T. S. Eliot's statement that *Everyman* is the only play in English that stays within the limitations of art. The truth is that the Westerner comes into the field of serious art only when his moral code, without ceasing to be compelling, is seen also to be imperfect. The Westerner at his best exhibits a moral ambiguity which darkens his image and saves him from absurdity; this ambiguity arises from the fact that, whatever his justifications, he is a killer of men.

IN *The Virginian*, which is an archetypal Western movie as *Scarface* or *Little Cæsar* are archetypal gangster movies, there is a lynching in which the hero (Gary Cooper), as leader of a posse, must supervise the hanging of his best friend for stealing cattle. He is thus in a tragic dilemma where one moral absolute conflicts with another and the choice of either must leave a moral stain. If he had chosen to save his friend, he would have violated the image of himself that he had made essential to his existence, and the movie would have had to end with his death, for only by his death could the image have been restored. Having chosen instead to sacrifice his friend to the higher demands of the "code"—the only choice worthy of him, as even the friend understands—he is none the less stained by the killing, but what is needed now to set accounts straight is not his death but the death of the villain

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Trampas, the leader of the cattle thieves, who had escaped the posse and abandoned the Virginian's friend to his fate. Here the woman intervenes: Why must there be *more* killing? What good will it be if Trampas should kill him? But the Virginian does once more what he "has to do," and in avenging his friend's death wipes out the stain on his own honour. Yet his victory cannot be complete: no death can be paid for and no stain truly wiped out; the movie is still a tragedy, for though the hero escapes with his life, he has been forced to confront the ultimate limits of his moral conceptions.

This mature sense of limitation and unavoidable guilt is what gives the Westerner a "right" to his melancholy. It is true that the gangster's story is also a tragedy—in certain formal ways more clearly a tragedy than the Westerner's—but it is a romantic tragedy, based on a hero whose defeat springs with almost mechanical inevitability from the outrageous presumption of his demands. The Westerner is a more classical figure, self-contained and limited to begin with, seeking not to extend his dominion but only to assert his personal value, and his tragedy lies in the fact that even this circumscribed demand cannot be fully realised. Since the Westerner is not a murderer but (most of the time) a man of virtue, and, since he is always prepared for defeat, his story need not end with his death (and usually does not); but what we finally respond to is not his victory but his defeat.

Up to a point it is plain that the deeper seriousness of the good Western films comes from the introduction of a realism, both physical and psychological, that was missing with Tom Mix and William S. Hart. As lines of age have come into Gary Cooper's face since the time of *The Virginian* so the outlines of the Western movie in general have become less smooth, its background more drab. The sun still beats upon the town, but the camera is likely now to take advantage of this illumination to seek out more closely the shabbiness of buildings and furniture, the loose, worn hang of clothing, the wrinkles and dirt of the faces. Once it has been discovered that the true theme of the Western movie is not the freedom and expansiveness of frontier life, but its limitations, its material bareness, the pressures of obligation, then even the landscape itself ceases to be quite the arena of free movement it once was but becomes instead a great empty waste, cutting down more often than it exaggerates the stature of the horseman who rides across it; we are more likely now to see the Westerner struggling against the obstacles of the physical world than carelessly surmounting them. Even the horses, no longer the "friends" of man or the inspired chargers of knight-errantry, have lost much of the moral significance that once seemed to belong to them in their careering across the screen. It seems to me the horses grow tired and stumble more often than they did, and that we see them less frequently at the gallop.

IN *The Gunfighter*, a remarkable film of a couple of years ago, the landscape has virtually disappeared. Most of the action takes place indoors, in a cheerless saloon where a tired "bad man" (Gregory Peck) contemplates the waste of his life, to be senselessly killed at the end by a vicious youngster setting off on the same futile path. The movie is done in cold, quiet tones of grey, and every object in it is given an air of uncompromising authenticity, suggesting those dim photographs of the 19th century West in which Wyatt Earp, say, turns out to be a blank, untidy figure posing awkwardly before some uninteresting building. This "authenticity," to be sure, is only æsthetic; the chief fact about 19th century photographs, to my eyes at any rate, is how stonily they refuse to yield up the truth. But that limitation is just what is needed: by preserving some hint of the rigidity of archaic photography (only in tone and décor, never in composition), *The Gunfighter* can permit us to feel that we are looking at a more "real" West than the one the movies have accustomed us to—harder, duller, less "romantic"—and yet without forcing us outside the boundaries which give the Western movie its validity.

We come upon the hero of *The Gunfighter* at the end of a career in which he has never upheld justice and order, and has been at times, apparently, an actual criminal; in this case it is

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clear that the hero has been wrong and the woman who has rejected his way of life has been right. He is thus without any of the larger justifications, and knows himself a ruined man. Indeed, if we were once allowed to see him in the days of his "success," he might become a figure like the gangster, for his career has been aggressively "anti-social" and the practical problem he faces is the gangster's problem: there will always be somebody trying to kill him. Yet it is obviously absurd to speak of him as "anti-social," not only because we do not see him acting as a criminal but, more fundamentally, because we do not see his milieu as a society. Of course it has its "social problems" and a kind of static history: civilisation is always just at the point of driving out the old freedom; there are women and children to represent the possibility of a settled life; and there is the marshal, a bad man turned good, determined to keep at least his area of jurisdiction at peace. But these elements are not, in fact, a part of the film's "realism," even though they come out of the real history of the West; they belong to the conventions of the form, to that accepted framework which makes the film possible in the first place. The true "civilisation" of the Western movie is always embodied in an individual, good or bad is more a matter of personal bearing than of social consequences, and the conflict of good and bad is a duel between two men. Deeply troubled and obviously doomed, the gunfighter is the Western hero still, perhaps all the more because his value must express itself entirely in his own being—in his presence, the way he holds our eyes—and in contradiction to the facts. No matter what he has done, he *looks* right, and he remains invulnerable because, without acknowledging anyone else's right to judge him, he has judged his own failure and has already assimilated it, understanding that he can do nothing but play out the drama of the gun-fight again and again until the time comes when it will be he who gets killed. What "redeems" him is that he no longer believes in this drama and nevertheless will continue to play his role perfectly: the pattern is all.

The proper function of realism in the Western movie can only be to deepen the lines of that pattern. It is an art form for connoisseurs, where the spectator derives his pleasure from the appreciation of minor variations within the working out of a pre-established order. If the hero can be shown to be troubled, complex, fallible, even eccentric, or the villain given some psychological taint or, better, some evocative physical mannerism, to shade the colours of his villainy, that is all to the good. Indeed, that kind of variation is absolutely necessary to keep the type from becoming sterile; we do not want to see the same movie over and over again, only the same form. But when the impulse towards realism is extended into a "reinterpretation" of the West as a developed society, drawing our eyes away from the hero, if only to the extent of showing him as the one dominant figure in a complex social order, then the pattern is broken and the West itself begins to be uninteresting. If the "social problems" of the frontier are to be the movie's chief concern, there is no longer any point in re-examining these problems twenty times a year; they have been solved, and the people for whom they once were real are dead. Moreover, the hero himself, still the film's central figure, now tends to become its one unassimilable element, since he is the most archetypal and "unreal."

THE most striking example of the confusion created by a too conscientious "social" realism is in the celebrated *High Noon*. Here we find Gary Cooper, still the upholder of order that he was in *The Virginian* but twenty-four years older, stooped, slower moving, awkward, his face lined, the flesh sagging, a less beautiful and weaker figure, but with the suggestion of greater depth that belongs almost automatically to age. Like the hero of *The Gunfighter*, he no longer has to assert his character and is no longer interested in the drama of combat; it is hard to imagine that he might once have been so youthful as to say, "When you call me that —smile!" In fact, when we come upon him, he is hanging up his guns and his marshal's badge in order to begin a new, peaceful life with his bride, who is a Quaker. But then the news comes that a man he had sent to prison has been pardoned and will get to town on the noon train; three friends of this man have come

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to wait for him at the station, and when the freed convict arrives the four of them will come to kill the marshal. He is thus trapped; the bride will object, the hero himself will waver much more than he would have done twenty-four years ago, but in the end he will play out the drama because it is what he "has to do." All this belongs to the established form (there is even the "fallen woman" who understands the marshal's position as his wife does not). Leaving aside the crudity of building up suspense by means of the clock, the actual Western drama of *High Noon* is well handled and forms a good companion-piece to *The Virginian*, showing in both conception and technique the ways in which the Western movie has naturally developed.

But there is a second drama intertwined with the first. As the marshal sets out to find deputies to help him deal with the four gunmen, we are taken through the various social strata of the town, each group in turn refusing its assistance out of cowardice, malice, irresponsibility, or venality. With this we are in the field of "social drama"—of a very low order, incidentally, altogether unconvincing and displaying a vulgar anti-populism that has marred some other movies of Stanley Kramer's. But the falsity of the "social drama" is less important than the fact that it does not belong in the movie to begin with. The technical problem was to make it necessary for the marshal to face his enemies alone; to explain *why* the other townspeople are not at his side is to raise a question which does not exist in the proper framework of the Western movie, where the hero is "naturally" alone. In addition, though the hero of *High Noon* proves himself a better man than all around him, the actual effect of this contrast is to lessen his stature: he becomes only a rejected man of virtue. In our final glimpse of him, as he rides away through the town where he has spent most of his life without really imposing himself on it, he is a pathetic rather than a tragic figure. And his departure has another meaning as well; the "social drama" has no place for him.

But there is also a different way of violating the Western form. This is to yield entirely to its static quality as legend and to the "cinematic" temptations of its landscape, the horses, the quiet men. John Ford's famous *Stagecoach* (1938) had much of this unhappy preoccupation with style, and the same director's *My Darling Clementine* (1946), a soft and beautiful movie about Wyatt Earp, goes further along the same path. The highest expression of this æstheticising tendency, however, is in George Stevens' *Shane*, where the legend of the West is virtually reduced to its essentials and then fixed in the dreamy clarity of a fairy tale. The mere physical progress of the film is so deliberately graceful that everything seems to be happening at the bottom of a clear lake. The hero (Alan Ladd) is hardly a man at all, but something like the Spirit of the West, beautiful in fringed buckskins, who emerges mysteriously from the limitless plain, breathing sweetness and a melancholy which is no longer simply the Westerner's natural response to experience but has taken on spirituality. The choice of Alan Ladd to play the leading role is alone an indication of this film's tendency. Actors like Gary Cooper or Gregory Peck are in themselves, as material objects, "realistic," seeming to bear in their bodies and their faces mortality, limitation, the knowledge of good and evil. Ladd is a more "æsthetic" object, with some of the "universality" of a piece of sculpture; his special quality is in his physical smoothness and serenity, unworldly and yet not innocent, but suggesting that no experience can really touch him. Stevens has tried to freeze the Western myth once and for all in the immobility of Alan Ladd's countenance. If *Shane* were "right," and fully successful, it might be possible to say there was no point in making any more Western movies; once the hero is apotheosised, variation and development are closed off.

SHANE is not "right," but it is still true that the possibilities of fruitful variation in the Western movie are limited. The form can keep its freshness through endless repetitions only because of the special character of the film medium, where the physical difference between one object and another—above all, between one actor and another—is of such enormous importance, serving the function that is served by the variety of language in the perpetuation

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of literary types. In this sense, the "vocabulary" of films is much larger than that of literature and falls more readily into pleasing and significant arrangements. (That may explain why the middle levels of excellence are more easily reached in the movies than in literary forms, and perhaps also why the status of the movies as art is constantly being called into question.) But the advantage of this almost automatic particularity belongs to all films alike. Why does the Western movie especially have such a hold on our imagination?

Chiefly, I think, because it offers a serious orientation to the problem of violence such as can be found almost nowhere else in our culture. One of the well-known peculiarities of modern civilised opinion is its refusal to acknowledge the value of violence. This refusal is a virtue, but like many virtues it involves a certain wilful blindness and it encourages hypocrisy. We train ourselves to be shocked or bored by cultural images of violence, and our very concept of heroism tends to be a passive one: we are less drawn to the brave young men who kill large numbers of our enemies than to the heroic prisoners who endure torture without capitulating. In art, though we may still be able to understand and participate in the values of the *Iliad*, a modern writer like Ernest Hemingway we find somewhat embarrassing: there is no doubt that he stirs us, but we cannot help recognising also that he is a little childish. And in the criticism of popular culture, the presence of images of violence is often assumed to be in itself a sufficient ground for condemnation.

These attitudes, however, have not reduced the element of violence in our culture but, if anything, have helped to free it from moral control by letting it take on the aura of "emancipation." The celebration of acts of violence is left more and more to the irresponsible: on the higher cultural levels to writers like Céline, and lower down to Mickey Spillane or Horace McCoy, or to the comic books, television, and the movies. The gangster movie with its numerous variations, belongs to this cultural "underground" which sets forth the attractions of violence in the face of all our higher social attitudes. It is a more "modern" genre than the Western movie, perhaps even more profound, because it confronts industrial society on its own ground—the city—and because, like much of our advanced art, it gains its effects by a gross insistence on its own narrow logic. But it is anti-social, resting on fantasies of irresponsible freedom. If we are brought finally to acquiesce in the denial of these fantasies, it is only because they have been shown to be dangerous, not because they have given way to a higher vision of behaviour.

In war movies, to be sure, it is possible to present the uses of violence within a framework of responsibility. But there is the disadvantage that modern war is a cooperative enterprise in which violence is largely impersonal and heroism belongs to the group more than to the individual. The hero of a war movie is most often simply a leader, and his superiority is likely to be expressed in a denial of the heroic; you are not supposed to be brave, you are supposed to get the job done and stay alive (this too, of course, is a kind of heroic posture, but a new—and "practical"—one). At its best, the war movie may represent a more civilised point of view than the Western, and if it were not continually marred by ideological sentimentality we might hope to find it developing into a higher form of drama. But it cannot supply the values we seek in the Western.

THESE values are in the image of a single man who wears a gun on his thigh. The gun tells us that he lives in a world of violence, and even that he "believes in violence." But the drama is one of self-restraint: the moment of violence must come in its own time and according to its special laws, or else it is valueless. There is little cruelty in Western movies, and little sentimentality; our eyes are not focused on the sufferings of the defeated but on the deportment of the hero. Really, it is not violence at all which is the "point" of the Western movie, but a certain image of man, a style, which expresses itself most clearly in violence. Watch a child with his toy guns and you will see: what most interests him is not (as we so much fear) the fantasy of hurting others, but to work out how a man might look when he shoots or is shot. A hero is one who looks like a hero.

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Whatever the limitations of such an idea in experience, it has always been valid in art, and has a special validity in an art like the movies, where appearances are everything. The Western hero is necessarily an archaic figure; we do not really believe in him and would not have him step out of his rigidly conventionalised background. But his archaicism does not take away from his power; on the contrary, it adds to it by keeping him just a little beyond the reach both of common sense and of absolutised emotion, the two usual impulses of our art. And he has, after all, his own kind of relevance. He is there to remind us of the possibility of style in an age which has put on itself the burden of pretending that style has no meaning, and, in the midst of our anxieties over the problem of violence, to suggest that even in killing or being killed we are not freed from the necessity of establishing satisfactory modes of behaviour. Above all, the movies in which the Westerner plays out his role preserve for us the pleasures of a complete and self-contained drama—and one which still effortlessly crosses the internal boundaries which divide our culture—in a time when other more consciously serious art forms are increasingly complex, uncertain, and ill-defined.

COMMENT ON A PHOTOGRAPHIC PORTRAIT

As in painting so in photography nothing is more difficult, it would seem, than to trap the particular beauty of a particular face. There are so many ways in which to go wrong. There is the risk of dramatising that beauty, so that the subject seems to be playing the part of himself. There is the risk of imposing an ideal beauty which smothers the uniqueness of the subject's appearance and personality; and, by going too far in the opposite direction, the risk of rendering every distinguishing detail with such fidelity and intensity that the picture becomes a mere character-study rather than the image of a living person.

Bernard Poinssot is among the rare portrait-photographers of genius who manages to negotiate the tightrope traversing these pitfalls. His images render the details of a face with a microscopic penetration and a comprehensiveness which might be thought as cruel as the public reading of somebody's diary. Yet, to our astonishment, this face, with its every blemish and deformity, disturbs us only by its beauty, a beauty that belongs only to this face.

To look at a portrait by Poinssot is to feel that the face we meet there is one we know very well. If there is a rational explanation for this, it probably resides in the nature of Poinssot's treatment of detail. The peculiarity of his photographs is that the detail they render is not only the dead detail of variations in texture but the living detail of inflexions of contour; few photographers have "modelled" the face with such subtlety, with such a realisation of tactile values. Consequently, there is a density in Poinssot's images which makes them real, a capture of the warmth and softness of flesh that makes them alive.

The photograph on the page opposite is almost the first example to be reproduced of the work of this remarkable young Frenchman who was born about thirty years ago in North Africa and works in Paris, where he has a studio and gallery in the rue Dauphine. It was among the pictures in an exhibition of Poinssot's work held recently in London, thanks to the enterprise of Mr. Peter Watson, at the Institute of Contemporary Arts.

David Sylvester

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Albert Camus

The Artist in Prison

UP to the time of writing *De Profundis* and *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*, Wilde had devoted himself to proving, by the example of his own life, that high intellectual gifts and prodigious talent do not suffice to make a man a creative artist. Nevertheless, his one desire was to be a great artist and, since art was his only god, it was unthinkable to him that this god should have refused him the grace of being one of the elect. For Wilde, indeed, there were two worlds: the everyday world and the world of art. He held that the former repeated itself with tedious monotony whereas the work of art was eternally unique. For this reason, he had turned his back on dull reality in order to live entirely in the radiance of what he believed to be ideal beauty. His great aim was to transform his own life into a work of art and to live only according to the laws of harmony and æsthetic sensibility.

No one went to such lengths as he in exalting genius, yet no one, during all that period of his life, was further from being an artist. He despised the world in the name of beauty yet, by the standards of true art, he was almost a nonentity. All his work of that time bears a sinister resemblance to the portrait of Dorian Gray, which developed wrinkles at a speed all the more alarming because the original appeared to remain young and attractive. As to his life, that life which he had hoped to make into a masterpiece, he judges it as it deserves in the opening pages of *De Profundis*. Nevertheless, he had claimed to put his genius into his life and his talent into his work. It was a brilliant saying and it delighted Gide, who adopted it as his own. But it was an epigram and no more. The same genius or the same talent is involved in both life and work. Obviously, a talent which could produce only artificial work could sustain only a frivolous and aimless life. One does not need to be a genius or even an aristocrat to dine every night at the Savoy; one merely needs to have enough money. Gide describes Wilde as an Asiatic Bacchus, an Apollo, a Roman emperor. "He shone," he says. And shine he undoubtedly did. But what does Wilde himself say in prison? "The supreme vice is shallowness."

Before he was sentenced, it is doubtful whether Wilde had ever thought of the existence of such things as prisons. If he did think of them, it was with the tacit conviction that they were not invented for men of his calibre. He even considered that the whole machinery of the law existed merely to serve his own privileged person, since he was the first to bring an action against Lord Alfred Douglas' father. Ironically, the action recoiled on him like a boomerang and resulted in his own condemnation. The law which he had intended to make his servant became his master. It was then that he realised that there were such things as prisons.

ALTHOUGH he admired Shakespeare, who put so many great and noble characters behind bars, it can be said that he admired him without understanding him. For, in all his thoughts and actions, Wilde disassociated himself completely from those who languish in gaol. If art was his only religion, he was one of its Pharisees. Not that Wilde was lacking in heart, as he was to prove. What he did lack was imagination. He was a solitary to whom others had always appeared merely as spectators, never as actors or sufferers. In his role of dandy, he had been too preoccupied with startling and fascinating his audience ever to be fascinated or

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startled by any kind of truth, even by that of the happiness he professed to pursue. The only happiness he knew was inseparable from a first-rate tailor. "My only mistake," he says in *De Profundis*, "was that I confined myself so exclusively to the trees of what seemed to me the sunlit side of the garden, and shunned the other side for its shadow and its gloom."

But, suddenly, the sun went out. By a strange twist of fate, he was condemned by the very courts to which he had so rashly appealed. The world for which he lived suddenly exposed its true face, a face contemptible in its mediocrity, and scrambled to be in at the kill. Overnight he found himself being scandalously persecuted by the scandalised. Hardly realising what had happened, he woke to find himself in a prison cell, wearing the convict's broad arrows and treated like a slave. Who would come to his help? If a brilliant life were the only reality then it was reality, in the guise of the world, which had thrown him into prison. If one can live only on the sunlit side of the garden, Wilde should have died of despair in those foul shadows. But man is not made for death and hence he is greater than the darkness. Wilde chose to live, though to live meant to suffer, because, in suffering itself he discovered reasons for living on.

"Do you know," he said, years later, to Gide, "what prevented me from killing myself? It was pity." Pity from the privileged and secure means nothing to a man who is suffering. Only the pity of a fellow-sufferer can move him. In the prison yard, a man, a total stranger, who was walking behind him at exercise, suddenly whispered: "Oscar Wilde, I am sorry for you; it is harder for the likes of you than for the likes of us." And Wilde, overcome, replied: "No, my friend. Here we all suffer alike."

Am I wrong in thinking that, at that moment, Wilde was conscious of a happiness of a kind he had never hitherto so much as imagined? All at once, he was no longer alone. The aristocrat condemned to the galleys, hardly knowing whether he was awake or in the throes of an appalling nightmare, was suddenly overwhelmed by a light which showed everything in a new perspective. He no longer felt any shame but the burning shame of having been the accomplice of that world which, having judged and condemned with indecent haste, goes off to dine at leisure. He realised that his brothers were not people who lived at the Ritz but men like the one who tramped ahead of him during that same exercise, muttering incoherently, or that other who was to inspire *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*. His were the shackled steps he was to hear among the clatter of other steps along the prison corridors at dawn. It was then that he wrote to the most frivolous of his friends: "There is not a single unhappy wretch imprisoned with me in this vile place who is not symbolically in touch with the secret of life."

In the same flash, he discovered the secrets of art. By an exquisite refinement of torture on the part of his persecutors, Wilde was brought into the Bankruptcy Court, wearing his prison dress and handcuffed between two policemen, to learn of his total ruin. An old friend, alone among the jeering crowd, gravely raised his hat to him in a salute to sorrow. That day, when he realised and wrote that this small gesture had "unsealed for him all the wells of pity," he became more capable of understanding Shakespeare and Dante. Hitherto, though he had talked about them copiously enough, his knowledge had been superficial. Now he had become capable of writing one of the finest books ever engendered by the suffering of an individual man.

From the very first sentence of *De Profundis*, there is a resonance in the language which, though he may have striven after it, Wilde had never before achieved. At its impact, the frail, glittering structures of his early works shiver into fragments. In essence, *De Profundis* is nothing else than the confession of a man who admits that he has deceived himself, not so much about life as about art, which he had tried to make his exclusive existence. Wilde realised that, in wanting to divorce art from suffering, he had severed one of its roots and thus cut himself off from real life. He had wanted to set beauty on a pedestal above the world, in order that he might the better serve it. Now that he wore the livery of a convict,

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he knew that he had dragged beauty down to sub-human level, since such art conveys nothing to those who are deprived of everything. There is nothing in *Salome* or *Dorian Gray* which corresponds to anything in a convict's heart. But the sorrow and joy in *King Lear* or *War and Peace* can be recognised by all who pine in our houses of injustice. When Wilde picked oakum with those hands which had hitherto picked nothing harsher than a rose, nothing that he or anyone else had written "on the sunlit side of the garden" could help him. Nothing could console him now but the great voice of genius which transforms man's common pain into glory. His own jewelled phrases, his ingenious, brittle tales had no power to succour him. But a single cry from Oedipus, acclaiming the order of the world in the very extremity of defeat, had that power. This is why Aeschylus was what Wilde had hitherto never been—a creative artist. In his highest incarnation, the genius is the man who creates in order that the poorest wretch in the darkest cell shall be honoured in his own eyes and those of others. What is the point of creating except to give a meaning to suffering even if only by crying out against it? In that moment beauty rises up from the ashes of evil and injustice. The supreme end of art is to confound the judges, to revoke the sentence and to justify everything, life as well as man, in the light of beauty which is no more and no less than the light of truth. No great work of genius has ever been wholly based on hatred or contempt. In some recess of his heart, at some point of his story, the true creator is ultimately a reconciler. He rediscovers the common measure in the strange banality it underlies.

How many artists arrogantly refuse to be ordinary men! Yet this very ordinariness might have been enough to give them the authentic talent they could never have achieved without it. In spite of themselves, their refusal makes them slaves so that they fall below that common human measure they so violently despise. Vast numbers of others imagine that, to be a genius, it is only necessary to attain the common level. They do indeed attain it, but never rise above it. These two types of folly are complementary. The art which refuses the truth of everyday life loses its vitality. But this life, though necessary to it, is not all that it requires. The artist may not turn his back on reality, because it is his mission to justify it on a higher level. How can one justify what one has decided to ignore? Yet how can one transfigure it if one consents to be its slave? At the point where these opposing currents meet the true genius stands, calm and mysterious, like Rembrandt's philosopher who stands between darkness and light.

That is why Wilde, when he emerged, exhausted, from prison, had only strength enough to write that admirable Ballad. He spent his last force in making those screams reverberate once more—the screams that burst from every cell in Reading Gaol to echo those of the prisoner whom men in frock-coats were hanging. Nothing in the world could interest him now but his brothers in anguish, most of all that brother who was being shamefully tortured in the name of decency. In the last sentences of *De Profundis* Wilde had sworn that henceforth art and suffering should be for him synonymous. *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* fulfilled that promise. It was the end of the precipitous road which had led him from the art of the drawing-room where everyone listens only to the echo of his own voice to the art of the prison where every cell cries out with the same cry of agony as the man murdered by his fellows.

Perhaps the shock of discovery was the beginning of another folly: the blind identification of all life with suffering. But, at that moment, Wilde deserves nothing but tenderness and admiration; the guilt must lie with his era and the world in which he lived. Servile societies like our own are to blame if it is only through the medium of suffering and slavery that they can perceive the truth. Truth can be discovered equally well in happiness when the heart is worthy. Indeed, what greater victory could men achieve than to attain clear-sighted detachment through joy? However, we are dealing with those who, by birth or propensity, can only, as Saint-Just says, conceive an appalling notion of happiness. For such men, suffering is one of the faces, if the less noble one, of truth; and the slave's truth is better than his

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master's lie. Nevertheless, Wilde's great soul, which suffering had raised above vanity, longed for that proud joy he had yet to discover beyond grief. "Then," he said, "I must learn to be happy." But he was not happy. The effort of striving towards truth, the mere resistance to everything which, in prison, tends to drag a man down, had exhausted his spirit. After the *Ballad*, Wilde produced nothing. No doubt he knew the unspeakable torment of the artist who has descried the promised land of genius but has no strength left to enter it. Poverty, hostility, or indifference did the rest. The world for which he had lived must have felt itself judged for ever by the man who had been in prison, and judged for what it was. Inevitably, it turned its back on the one who had been the guest of honour at its hollow feasts. Moreover, that world had judged itself afresh and once again condemned the poet, not for the vice of shallowness but for the impertinence of having suffered. Even Gide admits that he was embarrassed when he met Wilde in Paris, penniless and no longer able to write. The embarrassment must have been obvious, for Wilde was driven to an apology which makes us wish he were still with us. "You must not begrudge a man for having been struck down." Doubtless Wilde, wretched, lonely, doomed to sterility, dreaming occasionally of returning to London where he had been the "king of life," finally came to feel that he had lost everything, even the truth which had been revealed to him in prison. Yet he was wrong. Had he not left us a royal inheritance in *De Profundis* and *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*? He died among us in one of those streets on the left bank where artist and worker share the same hard life. His pauper's coffin was followed not by his brilliant companions of the old days but by the ordinary people of the Rue des Beaux Arts. Nothing could have been a more telling tribute to his new and higher rank. To the initiate, it was a sign that the man they were burying was a great artist who had barely survived his birth.

(*Translated by Antonia White*)

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Colin Clark

The Poverty of Nations

I HAVE a great aversion to the now conventional phrase "under-developed countries." Its origin is probably analogous to that of the absurd phrase "under-privileged," which we apply to a country's internal social affairs. Why cannot we use the plain term "unprivileged," or, to be more precise, just "poor"? The word "privilege," after all, means a right conferred by law or by long-established custom upon some group of citizens, which their fellow citizens do not enjoy. In the modern world, privileges are generally few and uncommon, and are tending to disappear. But then we have to go and coin a word which carries the utterly false implication that, in a properly ordered world we could all behave like hereditary noblemen, but that some of the poorer citizens still only enjoy some, rather than all, of the privileges to which they are entitled.

In international affairs likewise, we have coined the phrase "under-developed countries" to convey the impression that, if only things were a little different, the whole world could become an industrial area as highly organised as modern Chicago. Phrases like "undeveloped," "poor," "backward," or "have-not" are regarded as grossly discourteous and undiplomatic, and are rigorously excluded from all United Nations publications. Fortunately, however, this journal is not one of them.

That the whole world should become intensely developed industrially is perhaps a theoretical possibility. But there is a grave element of falsity about the phrase "under-developed," if it conveys the impression that every country is moving in that direction: when we examine all the available facts about economic development, we find that a number of countries are indubitably moving backwards, and a larger number are standing still.

This conclusion, which many people find novel, and which we all find disquieting, is certainly reinforced when we come to look at the historical evidence. This, though somewhat hazy, is certainly relevant. (If you catch sight of a distant range of mountains through a haze, you take it into account in writing the geography of the country you are exploring; you certainly do not ignore it on the grounds that you are unable to map it as closely as your immediate surroundings.) History shows us that, at various times and places in the past, very high levels of economic development have been attained, and, in almost every case, subsequently lost again. History, unfortunately, gives us almost as many records of decay as of growth, which may be the reason why the late Henry Ford, and indeed many others, have felt an instinctive aversion to it.

Certainly it is our duty to go out and controvert that caricature of history which the ordinary man seems to have picked up from his school books and his general reading, namely, that the whole world lived in a condition of dull, uniform, agrarian poverty until a beneficent piece of natural magic called "The Industrial Revolution" occurred—quite suddenly about 1780—when Englishmen began inventing steam engines, and spinning jennies, and so on, since when "modern progress" began, and the world has never looked back.

BEFORE we get any more deeply involved, we must pause and survey the currently available facts, and the methods of measuring them.

The Statistical Office of the United Nations now publishes tables, which have been widely

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quoted, purporting to show in dollars the national income of almost every country of the world, and also average incomes per head. It should be remembered, however, that the primary object of the United Nations Statistical Office has been to provide figures on which the different countries' financial contributions to the United Nations could be fixed. Whoever uses them to measure the real levels of economic development in different countries—which the United Nations Statistical Office does not—does so very much at his peril.

In the poorer countries there is considerable difficulty even in expressing the value of the national product in the country's own money. Not only do most of these countries have little or no statistical organisation, but, in addition, a large part of their national product consists of crops produced by peasant cultivators for consumption by their own families, which are never sold for cash at all. And when these difficulties have been overcome, there are still greater difficulties in converting the figures into dollars or any other international currency. The United Nations Statistical Office has done this simply by taking the current exchange rates. But anyone who has travelled in such countries will know that, at least so far as concerns many of the articles which the inhabitants buy, a dollar's worth of currency will buy a far greater quantity of goods than it would in the U.S.A., or even in Europe. To take the most extreme example; housing accommodation which would cost $5 in the U.S.A., and which could probably be obtained for the exchange equivalent of $3 in Europe, would cost only the exchange equivalent of $1 in the Orient.

This method of converting national incomes (or supposed national incomes) into dollars at the current exchange rates, therefore, seriously understates the real income of the poorer countries, and this statistical error is probably in a considerable part responsible for the air of frantic hopelessness which at present attacks so many well-intentioned practitioners in this field. For many years now (I published my first results on this subject in *Weltwirtschaftliches Archiv* in 1938) I have used a more refined and sophisticated method of expressing the real national product of different countries in dollars or their equivalent. But prolonged experience has shown that even methods which are quite satisfactory for comparing economically advanced countries are definitely unsatisfactory when applied to the poorer countries, whose whole style of living and scale of relative values are so different. Their incomes are almost entirely spent in the provision of food, fuel, clothing, and shelter, and many of the things on which the advanced countries spend their incomes are of no interest to them whatever. And their diet is so different, too. Meat and dairy products, which are taken for granted in the U.S.A. and Western Europe, are to them rather rare luxuries. Fruits and vegetables, which Englishmen find costly because of an elaborate system of transport and distribution, are to them cheap staple foods. Grains which in Western Europe are considered suitable only for animals, they eat readily. Their housing is extraordinarily cheap, comparatively, but not their clothing. Most marked is the difference in respect of what is, to Americans, one of the scarcest and dearest of all commodities, but which for them costs next to nothing: domestic service.

CONSIDERATION of all these facts has forced me to conclude that a new standard of comparison is needed, and it clearly seems best to take it from that Oriental country which has the best developed statistical system, namely, India. The amount of goods and services obtainable for one rupee in the year 1948–49 (for which year India made her first modern comprehensive study of national income) is therefore taken as a standard and used to obtain comparisons of real income and real national product with other countries. This new unit—take note that it is a unit of real wealth, not of money—is called for convenience an Oriental Unit, or O.U. The unit which I have used hitherto I have described as an International Unit, or I.U. This was defined as the quantity of goods and services exchangeable for one dollar in the base period 1925–34, which corresponds with the quantity of goods and services obtainable for slightly over $1½ at the present time. For those who wish to compare the two scales, it can be said, approximately, that about

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5 Oriental Units equal 1 International Unit. But a comparison of this sort should only be attempted in countries (or incomes) somewhere in the middle range, where either scale is in some degree applicable. To attempt to express the equivalent real income of an Oriental in dollars, or of an American in rupees, gives almost meaningless results. For this reason, in the accompanying table, which is prepared in Oriental Units, the higher income countries are all simply placed in one group of "over 1,000" Oriental Units per head. The wealthiest countries, however, may now have an average real income per head of five, six, or seven times this limit.

For the high-income countries, but only for a very limited number of low-income countries, we have reasonably comprehensive and reliable studies of national income. For some others of the low-income countries, we have reasonably good figures of agricultural and industrial production, though not of national income as a whole. But for a great many of the poorest countries we have not even this information. Nor does the United Nations Statistical Office; and in many cases it only estimates incomes by analogy with neighbouring countries.

A reasonably satisfactory method of estimating the order of magnitude of real incomes in the poorest countries was designed by Dr. M. K. Bennett, of Stanford University, who published his first preliminary results in 1937, and some more refined results in 1950. I have ventured to develop and extend his method, which uses a very ingenious statistical technique to take account of all available fragments of indirect information on such countries, such as statistics of railway traffic, fuel consumption, numbers of school children, postal communications, and the like. Even basic statistical information of this nature is less abundant in some countries than in others, and in this table, therefore, the entries differ in reliability; but none of them is pure guess-work.

THE reader on looking at the table may get an uneasy feeling, when he looks at the total of world population, that something is wrong. Surely, he will say, I have seen figures higher than that. Probably he has. And tracing the discrepancy he finds it in China, whose population is entered at 325 millions instead of the 475 millions as is commonly supposed.* There is astonishingly little information about the size or the rate of change of the Chinese population. But the two best demographers who have studied the subject, Professor Wilcox and Sir Alexander Carr-Saunders, have both come to the conclusion that the Chinese population has probably been stationary since about 1850, and Professor Wilcox has adduced considerable evidence to show that it has been much lower than commonly supposed, and probably only about 350 million. He was writing just before the long years of warfare which that unhappy country entered in 1937, and which are only just coming to an end, and there is considerable evidence that during this period there was a further depopulation.

It may be that China's poverty is due to over population, though she seems to be carrying less population than she was able to support a century ago, and it could be a fairer interpretation of the evidence to say that the ever-increasing disorder to which she has been subject over the past century has been the cause alike of her poverty and of her stationary population. In any case, the supposed rapidly increasing population of China, which is so often hypothecated, is almost certainly a myth.

Let us now consider, more specifically, some of the entries in the table.

This top group contains both new and ancient nations. It includes the old-established industrial countries such as Britain, France, and the Netherlands, and also the United States, which even in Adam Smith's time probably had the highest real income per head in the world. It includes countries like Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, which at the beginning of the 19th century were almost uninhabited, but which have enjoyed a high standard of real income throughout their period of development. It also includes—and this is one of the hopeful features of the table—some comparatively

* We are now told that a census has just been taken in China, and has revealed a population of over 500 millions. It will be very interesting to see the details, when they are published—if they ever are.

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Countries at different stages of economic development and 1950 populations in millions

Real income per head of population, in oriental units	EUROPE and U.S.S.R.	NORTH and CENTRAL AMERICA	SOUTH AMERICA	OCEANIA	ASIA	AFRICA	POPULATION TOTALS
Over 1,000	Austria 7 Belgium— Luxemburg 9 Czechoslovakia 12 Denmark 4 Finland 4 France 42 Germany 75 Ireland 3 Netherlands 10 Norway 3 Sweden 7 Switzerland 5 United Kingdom 50	Canada 14 Cuba 5 Panama 1 Puerto Rico 2 U.S.A. 152	Argentina 17 Chile 6 Uruguay 2	Australia 8 New Zealand 2 Samoa 1	Hong Kong 2	Union of S. Africa 12	447
750–1,000	Bulgaria 7 Hungary 9 Italy 46 Poland 25 Portugal 8 Soviet Union 210	Costa Rica 1 Mexico 25	Peru 8		Lebanon 1		342
500–750	Greece 8 Spain 28 Yugoslavia 16		Brazil 52 Colombia 11 Venezuela 5		Cyprus 1 Israel 1 Malaya 6	Mauritius 1 Southern Rhodesia 2	133
400–500	Rumania 16	Honduras 2 Jamaica 1			Japan 84 Syria 3	Tunis 4	109
300–400	Albania 1	Dominican Republic 2 El Salvador 2 Nicaragua 1 West Indies 2	Bolivia 4 Ecuador 3 Guianas 1 Paraguay 1		Aden 1 Iraq 5	Algiers 9 Libya 1 Morocco 10	44
200–300		Guatemala 3		New Guinea 2	British Borneo 1 Ceylon 8 Jordan 2 Philippines 20 Turkey 21	Egypt 20 Kenya 6 Madagascar 4 Northern Rhodesia 2	89
150–200					India 359 Iran 19 Pakistan 75 Thailand 18	French Equatorial Africa 4 Nyasaland 2 Sudan 8 Uganda 5	493
100–150		Haiti 3			Bhutan and Nepal 7 Burma 19 Indonesia 74 Korea 30 Saudi Arabia 6	Belgian Congo 15 British Colonies not elsewhere specified 42 Portuguese Colonies 10	206
Under 100					Afghanistan 12 China 325 Indochina 25 Yemen 5	Ethiopia 18 French W. Africa 18 Liberia 2	406
							2,269

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populous countries which started from a low or even primitive level, and whose economies have progressed so rapidly that they now find themselves in the top grade. In this category we include the development of South Africa and Hong Kong under British auspices, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and Panama under American. These results are very creditable indeed—one's only regret is that there are not more of them.

The next grade, with real incomes between 850 and 1,000 units per head, are a mixed lot. It includes the Soviet Union, where progress has been disappointingly slow. It includes Italy, which, after a great industrial past in the Middle Ages, had relapsed to a low level in the 19th century, but during the present century has been making about the most rapid economic progress of all the European countries. Ever since 1914, progress has been disappointingly slow in the countries of Eastern Europe: Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Rumania. Except for Poland and Austria, it looks as if the total productivity per head in these countries now is at or below the level of 1913—a very alarming result.

In this category we find only one Asian country, the predominantly Christian community of Lebanon. In Latin America we find Mexico and Peru, which have just been through a century or so of disorder and degradation, but now seem to be making an economic comeback.

We now come down to the countries in the 500–750 units income category. In Europe this includes Spain, one of the less productive economies; but this is a country of great diversities, with a rather advanced economy in Catalonia and Galicia, and a very backward economy in the south. (For that matter, if we treated northern and southern Italy as two different countries, we should get very different results.) We all remember that Spain suffered a particularly destructive civil war between 1936 and 1939, but few of us remember that in addition she also suffered two devastating civil wars during the 19th century, while most of Europe was comparatively peaceful, and so has a lot of leeway to make up.

In South America we get the three tropical countries of Brazil, Venezuela, and Colombia. These countries are alike in all having huge resources of land and minerals, which they have hardly touched yet—they are grossly underpopulated areas. Economically, this tropical belt of Latin America is one of the most hopeful regions of the earth's surface, and could absorb millions of migrants, and huge sums of capital, if they care to go there.

In Asia we find Israel and Cyprus, which are predominantly Westernised communities, and also Malaya, which is now by far the most advanced of the genuine Asian communities. Next on the list among the Oriental communities, but a long way down, we find Ceylon and the Philippines. There can be no denying the fact that these three countries, and Hong Kong, are the wealthiest and most economically hopeful communities in the Orient. This is not incompatible with their making strong claims for national independence—in fact, it is only a country which has achieved a certain degree of economic advancement which is likely to have the energy to make such a claim; a country where standards of living have been kept down to primitive levels is unlikely to do so. What is the secret of their economic success, as compared with the other Asian communities? The answer is quite clear—production of specialised crops and minerals for export: rubber, tin, coco-nut oil, tea, and sugar. So far from the export of these products representing an exploitation of the peoples of these countries, it has contributed enormously to their economic advancement. Whatever profits foreign capital may have taken out of these countries are small compared with the immense economic advantages which their inhabitants have obtained. It still remains to be seen, in Ceylon and the Philippines at any rate, whether an autonomous administration is capable of preserving order and continuing the economic progress which was set on foot by the previous colonial administration.

We now turn to Africa (one might also mention in passing Fiji and Tonga in Oceania, which have also reached about the same stage of economic development) and see a similar issue beginning to arise. Apart from the

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Westernised and industrialised economy of the Union of South Africa, the two most developed African communities are Southern Rhodesia and Mauritius, specialising in the export of minerals and sugar respectively. Mauritius has a somewhat longer history, but the mining industries in Rhodesia, and all the beneficial associated economic developments which go with them, are largely a matter of only the last twenty years. Everything which has been said about the developed economies in the Orient applies equally here.

DESCENDING the scale further to the 300–500 units of income range, we find, first, the two bad boys of the European family, Rumania and Albania. Albanians are sometimes inclined to boast that their country has really never been anything but tribal and barbarous, even when it was nominally part of the Turkish Empire; and Rumania seems to be a country which is steadily descending in the economic scale and may soon end up in the same condition.

But it is not for the American continent to sneer at the European—we find a large group of impoverished communities in Central and South America, and with much less reasonable excuse. Bolivia, Paraguay, and Ecuador have remained largely undeveloped, partly as a result of devastating wars in which they have been involved; and most of the Central American republics are not in much better shape. The colonial territories of the Caribbean, predominantly British, with some under Dutch and French administration, are nothing much to be proud of, and (except for a little oil development) do not show the hopeful economic progress which we find in Malaya and Rhodesia. Most of them are exporters of sugar, a perfectly good thing in itself, but they have relied upon it for too long and have become over-dependent upon one crop. The principal step necessary for improved economic health in the Caribbean area is to encourage emigration to the mainland, where Britain, France, and the Netherlands all control substantial areas of unoccupied land.

It is, of course, an anomaly that Japan finds herself in this lowly company. Before the war her income per head was rapidly moving towards the 1,000-unit level. The Japanese economy suffered a terrific devastation during the war, even more than the German, and has had much greater difficulty in recovering, partly for the reason that she needs to import fuel as well as food. The shortage of fuel has greatly slowed down the output of synthetic fertiliser, which is literally a matter of life and death to Japan. Japanese peasant cultivators obtain a far higher yield of rice per acre than any other Eastern country, principally through the abundant use of chemical fertilisers. The rate of recovery now is quite rapid, but it will probably still be years before the Japanese are able to bring their economy back to the level of productivity which it enjoyed before they deliberately started the war with China in 1937.

One may also note that Algiers, Morocco, and Tunis, under French and Spanish rule, though not as highly advanced as some of the communities which we have mentioned, are obviously well above the standard of most of Africa.

WE NOW examine the lowest classes on the international scale and the unfortunate countries which occupy them. Some of these countries have never had anything better, while some—and these perhaps are more to be pitied—are countries which have formerly known higher economic standards, and have slipped down. There is one of these countries in the Western hemisphere; namely Haiti, which in 1800 was a prosperous French colony and has now almost completed the turn of the cycle back to savagery.

Not only do we have examples from history to show that rapid descent is all too possible, there are also ghastly examples in the modern world: Burma, Indonesia, Indo-China, and Korea. It has required the tragedy of these countries to remind us of what we ought to have known before, that all the laboriously acquired economic and social gains of a century can be wiped out in a few years by political chaos, and countries relapse into banditry and barbarism. These are, it is to be hoped, the only examples in the modern world of an actual collapse of economic standards. There seem to be, however—it is difficult to say for certain

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because statistical information is very imprecise —very large areas of the world in which productivity is stationary or undergoing a slow decline. There is some evidence to show that a good deal of Latin America produces only about as much per head now as it did a hundred and fifty years ago, when it was part of the Spanish Empire. Unprogressive though that Empire may have been, the recurring military despotisms which have followed it have not proved a very satisfactory form of government either.

India and Pakistan suffered fearful bloodshed and economic disorder when they were separated in 1947—but this is only an earnest of the far worse disaster which would have occurred had a futile attempt been made to keep them together by force, as some uninformed persons proposed. These countries are probably only about now getting back to the economic standards which they had reached by 1940. But the work of Indian statisticians leaves no doubt that under British rule, between 1870 and 1940, production of goods *per head* in India was nearly doubled. Many Indian historians claim, however, and there is some evidence to support them, that the Indian standard of living now is not very different from what it was three centuries ago, under the Emperor Jahanghir, the last of the Mogul Emperors who was able to keep order throughout his vast domains. This is not incompatible with the previous statement. All the evidence shows that India, throughout the 18th and part of the 19th centuries, suffered a frightful period of disorder, impoverishment, and bloodshed, and the laborious and undoubtedly beneficial efforts of British administrators still only served to bring the country back to where she had been before the period of confusion started.

In no sense did the "have" countries deliberately create the poverty of the "have-nots"; in fact, in so far as they have played any active part in their economic affairs, they have greatly improved them, as in countries like Ceylon, Malaya, and Rhodesia. The only accusation which can be levelled against the wealthier countries is not one of malevolence, but of unawareness or indifference. It may even be that they intervened in the economic affairs of the have-not countries too little, not too much.

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William Sansom

Trouble in Wilton Road, Victoria

A Ballad

I LIKE to lay a table and my Addie liked it too, that is, the tables that I laid.

While Addie'd take her time to make her steam and fry among the shelves where Vim vied yellow and the cups as white as milk gave eye to scrubbers sitting grey to dry themselves, while Addie bent about and rollerpinned away the way big-skirted women have about their larder task—why, I'd be alone within a room of oh such sudden death, sudden as death our lively parlour-room, silent as doom!

Nobody about! Now those four walls would in the ticking of a clock go slow, the slow walls ticked, the armchairs grew aware and waited with the walls for what the night would bring, all daytime done and this the interval, six struck upon the clock and no more now till seven.

No more? . . . No more but much for me, for in the silence of our empty room, by dying of the tea-time fire, I was alone to do my own, this was my hour! And quietly to the flicker of my finger-ends I went to work.

First to remove the afternoon. Set it to rights for night. Off-hob the colding kettle. Poker to roust new roses from the ash. Horsey black nuts upon the top of all (when sometimes I would twist my paper spills and lay them there like curlers in a pickaninny's hair). Soon then the yellow flaming in the black, the mirror come alive above the mantelpiece and shadows playing nurseries on the wall. And now I'd take the cushions up from where they'd squashed into the chairs. I'd conk my cushions trim. And then pick up the dead-read news, straighten the goals and faces of garrotters (do-in-your-judy-men from Epping, newsyborn pride of our nylon race). Pick up my Addie's ball of wool akitten on the stool. Pick up her pools. Tread in the carpet's ash to stay the moth, bother myself with this and that but then as soon as ever I was able—turn to my dearly loved, my table-cloth.

Off with my Addie's tatting-bag, up with the pins and bits of stuffs—lovely for uncut picknose nails to pincer up a pin!—and there would lie our tidy plush as lush as new, lick-a-lip spotless smooth and ready, steady go for . . . *You know what!*

Oh lords and little ladies! I'd be off my nut to get there quick, hop-skippy-hop on tippy-toe the mirror'd see me go to where our cupboard stares mahoganly pretending nothing's there!

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The mirror'd see me do! My Addie'd screwed our looking-glass fast above the mantelpiece, wide as a wall itself it was, winking its wicked metal stars, waving its bend that made a circus of your chops and made my Addie fit to burst her straps . . . but mostly that old mirror only watched, old sly big-eye, and if you'd think it didn't watch you'd think instead there lay another room within the wall, a room they say reversed and smaller than the real reflected, yet in reflection made a mystery, a room you loved the more like memories of times before or something from a bogeytale. . . .

White whip-away! She's out! My damask rose, my cloth of angel-gold, ironed to a crease, fold upon fold of laundered love white as a kite but for the red-ticked laundry vein and here and there a saucey little stain.

Two saucey stains, one Ay-one brown, one red Okay. But expertise would cover these with doily-mats and none but expert eyes could say where they were laid.

And there—she was on! Glittering in the circle of the light so white that all else turned as black as night—or blue-black like our panes that made a ghostie of the light far in the outside dark, made me a moving ghost there too, pale hands and shadowface alimbo in the cold I do not love—curtains to that! And curtains it was, end of the outdoor hour, the day, and views of Wilton Road, Victoria.

Now you can see it's winter-time, the time I'm telling of. We had our summer suppers too, salad and glass and coldabouts, straining to see the last blue sky above the chimney-pots . . . the open window echoed hopscotch cries and lovebleats from the traffic filled the air. Sad summer-time! Nor day nor night, you don't know if you're in or out, you feel you ought to take the air when all you want on earth is nothing else but forty in a big armchair. No—summer is as summer be, let sleepy summers lie their hearts away and give me a winter six o'clock, fog on the lamps and dew-drop to the nose, meat-smell of smoke and frying on the air—then is the time to light the fire, pull curtains close and lay the table for a cockle's warmth of silver shining round the hot brown gravy-meat!

The gravy-meat—so out and set your knives! I take my yellow-handled knives for first to mark the place where what's to be, then follow up with forks a plate's-width-and-a-bit apart and hi-di-dee a spoon across the top you've made a square! Squares you are making—none to argue there.

Now in this square, white empty square, not too far this way, not too far that, but neat and sweet in centre of your square—I'd put my round! I'd put my ringaround of doily-mat! Squaring the circle, circling the square, most unbeknownst of hidden joys, whenever people talk of poking square pegs where it's round I have to laugh, I don't let on the other way around I've found, my doily-mats amoon among the square-cut cutlery.

Then—side-plates I'd sorcerize! Saucers for saucey eyes, roundly my roundelay rings as it sings . . . and then against such new-found moons I'd square a bit again, set out more spoons, a ladle, line up Old Carver and Miss Prong his Fork—why for two pins I'd set the bread-saw canting

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at a slant, all by itself, arrow askew at venture . . . this is the way I'd make my squaring squarer still, *by putting some things out of square* . . . chew that one over if you dare!

But all this time that mirror'd see me do.

So I'd eye back, I'd spy the other fellow in the other room, I'd nod, he'd nod, we'd smile—and then the race we'd have!

Flashing of finger-tips, flicker of mirror-flash—flash of all metal mirror'd stars as in their longside rooms, one nightly bright, one dark as dreams are bright, two figures rushed about their table-lay!

While through the lintel-cracks, by jamb and jamb came creeping smells of meaty fry, you'd know how far the fry-by-night was come, dumb sightless shadows seemed to nose the smell along unseen. And here reflection is a funny thing for I could swear that though that other fellow's door might open in his room, heads poke around, my Addie's more than like—I swear he'd got no smell in there with him. Right, you may say—how can a looking-glass reflect what isn't there? I know as well as you that other fellow wasn't really there as well—and yet, where was he then, for what is is, and if he was, where was he?

But to resume, for fry is fatting hot around the room . . . what's next? . . . My condiments, of course! Seasonal fare, condiments of season, dumb little cruet, gruff little three-knobbed puffer puffing nowhere all at once—where can you go my glass-top silver-rail when all the time you're facing thriceways, condiments to you, but all at once?

Trying to be a fairy castle, eh? Well here come a brace of giants, Ay-one and Okay, bummerkin galumphers two, saucey old chimney-pots—they're looking for the princess you've encaged to be married. . . . Summon up then the Sugarknight, summon up Silverboy, where can bold Castorvisor be?

But now I'm getting fancified—my sauces and my vinegars and oils look more like sauces, vinegars and oils except a little more—set on the table-top, close to the gravy-stain, they're rich as restaurants, they smack of chefs and serviettes to taste and sauce-brown drabble over pink of lip. Serviettes? Napkins here! Come, carie-bone, grave our initials ring-a-ring, no rooming numbers but our double names, Addie's and mine, they're intertwined a-ring as did or do our lives, that is, before the sad thing fell, what came to pass.

But now the smell is rising fast, now for the lastly things, the cheese's china lean-to and the bread its loaf of house and . . . No! No glassy jar of flowers! For how can gravy-meat be ate with flowers staring in the face? Gravy and pondweed never mingle true, mud in your eye is simply out of place.

My glasses now! Tom Bumblers two, and with a stout black frilltop if its fish, or amber ale from India to match the meat . . . and there she's set, my table's laid, fancy as all-get-out, tazzy as tell-your-mum—and me I'm tiptoe to the door and calling:

Addie, Addie dear, I'm ready now!

Or sometimes: Addie darling! Addie—shut your eyes! Donald's got a lovely big surprise!

And Addie'd scream, if she could get it out for laughing:

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Eyes, he talks of eyes! Who's eyes are bigger than his tum, I'd like to know?

Nearer the bone the sweeter the meat, I'd give her back. But who is sweeter still?

Go on with you, she'd cry.

I'll say we larked it up a bit. I'd have that girl in fits, I'd split my sides theirselves—then laughing like a drain my Addie'd sail within and plonk it down, what we had there to eat, bangers and mash, or chop-and-greens, or toad, or two-on-a-raft and dick to follow up.

Now you might say: What's all this fuss about a plate of toad?

And I say back to you that you can stuff your Sunday dinners, give me my suppers, yes and sardine suppers too, if even that, for supper-time's the time that two are two together, workaday done, at rest the two, no more to do than sit and sup before their fire, woman and man together, heart to heart's desire.

Thus with my Ad and me. Winter and Summer and Autumn and Spring I'd lay my table like I told you, Addie would love my lay, I'd lay it for my love, my love-long spread—and then we'd have our supper, lark about a bit, and up the wooden stairs to Bedfordshire. We wanted nothing more. I had my Addie, Ad had me. Our little home was happy as could be.

Until the day that Pilchardman came by. . . .

Oh why did Pilchardman come by to bring his woe?

Oh why did Pilchardman come off his sea, leaving his nets to spread his wiles where none had cast before, Victoria?

And why was Addie nipping by to get her set of kirby-grips that very day at ten past four, the fourth of May?

And what on this wide earth, with time so long, with hours and days and weeks and months and miles around to spare—made Addie drop her grips just there?

That ever-watchful Pilchardman was lurking in a door—leapt forward, eyes afire, red as a rugged rock, dark as the navy sea, his flashing eyes, his witching hair . . . and in his gold-ringed hand my Addie's grips retrieved with all a Pilchardman's entrancement . . .!

Oh fateful fisherman, why bring your merman ways our way, betiding us this woe?

That day my Addie was bewitched.

The next she'd gone.

I've not set eyes on her that day to this.

Off she was gone to the west, where earth they say is red and sea-mead drunk and salt winds make their siren music and those Pilchardmen, dancing round stones at sunfall, weave their saddening spells. . . .

Or was he just a bine-a-mouth, a pad-boy from a pin-saloon, a dandy-man of taking ways who took my Ad away, two one-way tickets on a western train, my Ad and all gone west?

I'll never know. But what I do know's this—I'll never lay a table like I did again, I that so loved to lay, I haven't got the heart to start—now Addie's gone away.

Oh Addie darling. . . .

Oh my dearest dear. . . . These days the grate lies cold, I cannot hardly

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bear to light a fire, I simply sit and stare at where her place lies never laid and bare.

A man must eat, I eat—but now it's loaf for me, no toad no more, cold loaf . . . a nice sardine I used to like, there was a time when I would take a sardine to my supper—but that's all over too, for reasons best to guess. . . .

No, all I do's eat loaf alone, stare at her empty place, stare at the mirror too, to see that other lonely fellow sitting there . . . and all that I can do is hold myself from crying out to him: Beware! beware! . . .

Until I see of course he's really me.

Yet—here's the funny thing, where once that fellow had no cooking smell to warm his room, now it is me has none yet there with him I seem to sense there's cooking going on, it's darker in there where he sits . . . and once—and is this how a man goes off his nut?—I started from my chair, his table there was laid! Knives glittered there and glass until I passed my hand across my eyes and saw it was no more than metal stars, the spark they made . . . yet that is how it starts . . . and now I cannot hardly wait till supper-time to see . . . perhaps it's laid tonight! . . . But nowadays my eyes are not for him so much, for now I'm sure there's more to come, my eyes are on the corner of the door . . . for what's—perhaps tonight!—to come. . . . I'm sure that door . . . will open . . . and I'll see my A . . . my Ad . . . my ADDIE standing there!

Alan Ross

Kurdish Shepherds

They squat silhouetted against the hills,
A handful of men with rifles, sharp-nosed
And dark, with pale blue turbans whose frills
Hang down on their shoulders, as if they were posed.

They might have been there for ever, lost
In their spiritual mnemonics, herds grazing
At will or wandering beneath them on mossed
And irregular plains—till sunset drops in a flare
Illumining them, suddenly making their world amazing.

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Deben Bhattacharya

Two Themes in Indian Poetry

I. LOVE

LOVE came to prominence in Indian poetry through the Vaishnava movement, which developed from the middle of the 11th century and reached its zenith towards the beginning of the 15th. The principles of the Vaishnava philosophy are the union of phenomena with the absolute; but whereas in earlier Sanskrit literature, like the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna appears only as that divine aspect of the godhead which embodies action and wisdom, the Vaishnava movement gradually transforms him into a lover too: the union of the human and the divine, of this world and the other, is seen as an act of love.

Through the following poem by Chandidas, an early 15th century Bengali poet, Radha—the feminine counterpart to Krishna, and representing the world of the senses—expresses her love for Krishna, calling him by one of his many names, Shyam. She has heard about him; she knows the place where he lives; yet she has not seen him:

O friend, who made me hear the name
of Shyam?
Through the ears, piercing my heart,
It threw my life into confusion.
Such honey in the name of Shyam,
My tongue can never leave it:
Tasting it over and over again,
I have lost control.
How shall I reach him?

If such is the power of his name,
What would happen if I touched his body?
How could a young girl keep to the right path
Seeing the place where she lives?
O, how I want to avoid such thoughts,
Such stubborn thoughts, I cannot escape.
What shall I do?

In company with Radha, the Vaishnava poets begin their search for Krishna, the Eternal, ignoring the conventional distance between God and human. To them he is here and now, in life and in death. He is not allowed to live undisturbed, but is here on earth to share human experiences. He sees Radha and confides to a friend his love for her. His first sight of Radha's face affects him like the power of lightning, and he uses the symbolism of lightning to express it:

Like frozen lightning her fair face
I saw at the river bank,
Hair plaited as a coiled snake
Dressed with jasmin lace . . .

Her darting glance, and gentle smile
Made me eager . . .

Her face was bright with mischievous smiles,
And feet, adorned with anklet bells,
Were painted red.

Radha has also seen him, from a distance. She confides to her friend, using some of Krishna's other names:

Cloud-coloured Kanu, dark mascara,
Kanu, all nectar, has at last appeared!
My eyes like the bird that drinks moonlight,
Continually thirsting, cannot bear a wink's delay.
O friend, I saw Shyam's beauty going to the stream.
What a glance that drives from my heart
All memory of the world!
Two arrows—those bewitching eyes—
Having pierced my heart
Kill my sense of right and wrong.
Draw me body and soul.

And so they meet, Radha and Krishna. The soul and its God. Each explores the other in his or her own way. Radha with hesitation, uncertainty, Krishna with his supreme and

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certain consciousness. Every aspect of Radha's body and soul reveals a world to Krishna. He watches her indecision with sympathy and understanding—until finally he seizes her:

Her whispering voice is shivering,
She is shy to shape words.
What has happened tonight to beautiful Radha?
Now she agrees, now she is afraid.
When begged for love, she closes her eyes,
Eager to sink in the ocean of love.
When pressed for a kiss,
She turns her lips away.
Shy, like a night lily, she is seized by the moon . . .

And then, Vidyapati, the great Maithili poet (14th–15th century) concludes by commenting:

Vidyapati wonders at the neglected bed,
The lovers are lost in each other's arms.

Radha's resistance and indecision are still not quite shattered. From time to time she gets caught by a floating happiness on her way to be one with her God, but then again falls victim to her resisting mind. She speaks to her friend:

The first watch of the night was a world of lovely dream!
Under the *kadamba* tree Kanu held me to his side,
Kissed my lotus-like face.
Painting me with sandal paste, gently he spoke to me
And sweetly played on his bamboo flute.
He wanted to make love to me,
But I did not let him,
(My unfaithful heart!)
I was looking at him till the second watch.

Gradually Radha's resistance breaks down:

At the third watch of the night I was clasped to his heart,
Still gazing at his moon-like face.
Smiling, he stole my heart away,
I was anxious and restless for love.
At the fourth watch of the night Kanu drank my lips,
I was at peace with love.

But unfortunately, both in spiritual and in material experience, one has to be ready for disappointment. The poet Chandidas now dramatically ends the poem by bringing in the element of disappointment:

Suddenly a fatal scream from the morning *kokila* bird
Shattered her sleep and dream.

Left alone in the morning, Radha lingers over the memory of the night. She has conquered her resistance, but now she is haunted by a fear: the fear of losing.

Never have I seen such love,
Nor heard.
Even a wink's delay contains eternity.
Clasped to my breasts you are far from me.
Stay as my veil close to my face,
How I fear when you turn your eyes away.
We spend the night: one body,
Sinking in the fathomless ocean of joy.
As the dawn comes, our anxious hearts watch
Life deserting us.

The lovers part at dawn, but the forces of love leave their marks. Radha's timid mind is experiencing it now—how the male and female elements are enhanced by each other. Face to face with the realities of daylight, she realises the growth of the male element in her: spirit invests matter. In their hurry, their clothes have got misplaced. Krishna has gone away wearing Radha's clothes, leaving his own for her:

The morning crows and the *kokila* cried
The end of the night.
My lover was up and hastily left
Fixing his dishevelled hair.
I cannot tell you, my friend, how I suffer!
My dark lover left me without a word,
My heart is aching.
In langour I was resting,
My eyes were heavy,
When I discovered his clothes on me.

Krishna is a free spirit. He wanders. The 16th century poet, Govindadas, expresses in the following poem his feeling, a mixture of joy in Krishna's return, and disgust at his affair with Kubja, the ugliest woman in the neighbourhood:

So long in the boundless sky the light of snow . . .
Unending scintillation of snow-rays . . .
Lightning frozen in the clouds.

Elaborate, graceful, as the yak-tail plume
Flourished before the image of God,
Loveliness enters the town.

So, Murderer, you raise your bow again.
Lost in your heart, Madhav, I understand.
Sundered from one, you met many desires,
Rai was left alone.

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You have held laughing even in the day the
People of moon-flowers, tinctured by a light
Like a new colour of the sun.

Blossoming like the light of clustered pearls.
Gentle with power the gait of the elephant.
O peerless Lover, which of the city-girls
Met you in love, I'll never know.

Everyone else knows, Govindadas retorts:
Kubja, the hunchback, now is the new queen.*

Krishna tries to appease Radha:

Hold your anger, my beautiful one!
I promise by the golden pitchers of your breasts,
And by your necklace-snake
I hold in my hands:
If ever I touch anyone but you,
May your necklace bite me.
If my words do not ring true,
Punish me as I deserve.
Bind me in your arms and bruise me with your thighs,
Choke my heart with your milk-swollen breasts.
Lock me day and night in the prison of your heart.

But if Krishna can play the mischievous lad, so can Radha play the naughty girl:

When my lover will come to my courtyard,
Smiling, I shall turn away.
Eager, he will hold my *sari* and pray,
Yet I'll not return.
When he will beg me for love,
I'll smile but not speak.
As he will rush at my bodice
I'll stop him with my hands and a crooked glance.
Anxious, the beautiful bee will seize my chin,
Drink honey from my lips,
Looting my consciousness.

(Vidyapati)

Krishna is now bewitched. His playfulness disappears. He surrenders himself to Radha's mercy. In the final union of Radha and Krishna, both disappear in one another, they are merely two names. They can be called lightning and cloud. They are the basic forces of the universe struggling to meet one another. Both the elements, love and violence, are moving side by side, like two rivers eager to meet in the sea of life. The poet Jnanadas now gives us an account of the union of these two elements:

Given over, both, to the combat of delight—
Unflagging lightning in new clouds of rain:
Radha and Kana on a couch of flowers.
Both hearts inveigled by the mind-born god,
Again and again they kiss with startled eyes,
Her little breasts ravished by violent nails.
To see them at their love-sport in the bower,
What joy reigns in the heart of Jnanadas.*

The theme of Radha and Krishna's love gave new life and inspiration to the various languages in Indian poetry. Kabir and Suradas in Hindi, Sant Tukaram in Marathi, Mirabai in Rajasthani, Vidyapati in Maithili and so on. With Bengali poets, this theme had a much greater and deeper influence, evolving a new style in poetry between the 14th and the end of the 17th century. The popularity of this theme with the poets was, perhaps, because it satisfied a natural desire for blending facts and imagination, and giving a visual and personal form to an abstract idea, the lover Krishna.

II. THE CITY

THE experiences of famine, riot, and political unrest were not unfamiliar to the era of the Vaishnava poems. But these were simply not regarded as suitable matter for poetry. In contrast, today in India, social and political consciousness has supplemented—and in many cases almost replaced—the religious awareness of the previous epoch. The relaxed atmosphere of Vaishnava literature is being replaced by a new one of tension. Detailed description of landscape is being replaced by quick and staccato forms, dramatic but less lyrical. Language and diction are beginning to be largely colloquial. Ornamental style, and the indirect hint which suggests a situation, are giving way to a new directness of approach and to terse expression. In some ways, modern writing seems to be gaining a primitive strength, though presented in its own sophisticated forms.

Here is an excerpt from a Bengali poem entitled *Citizen*, by Samar Sen. In this, the

* Translated in collaboration with the late Lewis Thompson.

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poet is trying to express the power and emotion behind the ugliness of Calcutta:

In Calcutta dawns a tarnished day, then a
coal-tar night.
And day,
The whole day I hear a rumble of steam rollers,
While distant jackaranda glints a red flame,
The smell of melted pitch weighs in the air.
And night.
The night is only a shrieking nightmare
Of a roller on stones.

Still the poet looks for beauty in life:

Yet, some moments, like golden snakes,
Cross our way
While the sky over the jute mills
Hangs hard as stone.
I see a grey road
Flooding green with the trees at the side,
And a distant sun-set . . .

A rippling breeze would come
From an island . . .
Where the whole day a red sun sets
Over a green sea.

Or, again, the following excerpt from another poem entitled *Preface*, by Arun Kumar Mitra, expresses a new restlessness, a new consciousness of the value of time in relation to a changing world in which steel is as important as poetry, if not more so:

What ghostly light has faded out
Beyond the empty field?
Have restless days then come?
The city of dreams is gone to dust
—Sprinkling stars—
The sun descends a sudden call.
Hour by hour, a sharpness, time,
Circles round the foundry steel.
The worthless night is wiped away
In lassitude.

Indian poetry has, perhaps, never before been so "socially conscious." The following excerpt from *Broken Rhythm*, by the Bengali poet, Bimal Chandra Ghose, expresses the feeling of a struggling poet and his relationship with the helpless crowd seeking freedom around him:

Two hours past midnight.
Perching on the boundary wall
Of the moon-struck courtyard
An owl hoots,
Sudden and harsh.
In that stifling blind alley
Is my tenement.
On the crusted wall that shuts out sun and air,
In the silver moon
A shadow trembles:
A neighbouring palace.
In my sleepless body,
A distressed, escapist mind seeks freedom.
Whose freedom?
I know countless minds all over the world,
Seek freedom
From hunger, thirst, distress, sorrow and slavery . . .

In the next example, Bishnu Day captures the tragedy of a city: crowd, noise, hunger, and hurry. An occasional influence of T. S. Eliot can be felt:

Files of ants, countless,
O crowded City,
O City weighed down with dreams!

Five minutes,
Only five minutes!
Can you hear the steps of time
Flying and fading away?
The train is nearly in
At Howrah . . .

Along with this documentary emphasis there is introspection. The Indian world, like the western world since Descartes, is now divided into *res extensa* and *res cogitans*:

Day and night I seek myself
And him I meet is not my search.
In shape and dress and words and action,
He is split,
Not at peace with body or mind . . .

His army of dreams
Run to blast the doors of a false heaven
Guarded by moats of space:
A lighted universe.

There, his agent, a cruel God,
The corrupt Emperor,
Like a feudal Lord lost in his thoughts,
Silently weaves a web,
A conspiracy . . .

(*Search* [Bengali], by Sudhindra Nath Dutta)

Bishnu Day embraces darkness, the unknown, as if it were a symbol of his beloved. In spirit, his poems have the same quality as

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the Vaishnava poems—the poets stretching out their loving hands to the dark Krishna, the unknown. But in style, Bishnu Day is far nearer to the Vedic vitality:

Wipe out this sky today,
Paint the night dark,
Drown the moon
In thick mascara of sleeplessness.
Cover my eyes with your silent feet.
Come through the bulwark of wind,
Through the muffled sound of the sea,
Holding your breath,
Come, quickly.
Naked, let us meet
In the stillness of dark,
In the empty space of sleepless night,
Face to face.
Break the earth into pieces,
Spread it in the sky.
With darkness, come in me.

(*Wish*)

In the next example it is obvious that the symbolism used by Bishnu Day is quite different from the symbolism of elemental forces as used in the Vaishnava poems. In this, through the use of the symbolism of quick-sand in contrast with that of the horseman, the poet has conveyed how an overpowering desire can numb all the ability for action:

Tidal waves on human sea,
My heart, a sandy island.
Quick-sand, I call far away,
Where are you, Horseman?
O Conqueror of the worlds,
Raise your spear,
Why afraid?
Why forget the hope of the brave?
Rise and fall call on your eyes.
Quick-sand, I cry far away,
My heart, a sandy island . . .

Quick-sand, I call far away,
Where is your action?
Love, my beloved,
Desire simmers in space,
Will you not offer your promise
Upon my body? . . .

Raise your spear with a light air,
Beyond the rivers and the seven seas—
Fill your heart with a light air,
And ruthlessly crush my timid doors.
Here, the hills with a light air
Weave dreams of storms and hails and snows.

My desire in the shape of a shadow
Follows your steps,
Pressed to your body.
My breath, my body, tremble with desire
My desire halts a glacier . . .

(Excerpt from *Horseman*)

In spite of a trend towards emotional austerity in order to concentrate on social and economic problems, which seem to be the dominating features in contemporary Indian poetry, there are some who still write poems on romantic love, using the symbols of elemental forces as they were constantly used in Vaishnava poetry. But *you* and *I* have replaced Radha and Krishna. Here is a translation of a section of a poem entitled *Now a war is on with the earth*, by Buddhadeb Basu. In this poem the poet introduces a "twining, bewildering road" between his lovers to symbolise the complexity of the modern mind. This, of course, dissolves as the forces of love grip the lovers:

Now a war is on with the earth, this earth.
I am on one side,
On the other side, your eyes frozen in intimate silence.
In between us, a twining, bewildering road:
This earth.

And the people of this earth stretch their hands,
To draw a red line between you and me,
They stretch their hands like live venomous snakes . . .

Whom shall we fear?
We know what awaits us at the turn of this road—
That is you, you and I . . .

Dreams of heaven on my eyes,
My eager hands warm on your breasts
Overflooding,
Like the blinding currents of an invisible river,
Drowning this raging earth.

Only an immense river, a dark, sharp whirlpool,
Where we are conquerors, we are one,
You and I—how sweet,
How exquisitely sweet these words—
You, you and I.

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Enquiry into God is now seldom carried out with the lyrical subjectivity and submission that is found in the Vaishnava poems; it, too, is now involved with "social consciousness":

He will merge the stormy wind
With the broken doors
Of that crumbling house,
He will merge.
You wouldn't shudder at the wild gusts!
In famine, in fire,
Stray dogs, thirsty, we lick the fields
Flooded, in pouring rain.
The earth floating on its final tears.
He will merge them all . . .

Rising dust from the wheels of cars
Drive them away!
Them! The mere people,
Hard, hurt, insolent, helpless . . .

Yet, God has taken up the dirty broom . . .

He will merge the stormy wind
With the crumbling doors,
He will merge.

(Excerpt from *Sangati*, by Amiya Chakrabarty)

This change of emphasis has produced an acute awareness of self-preservation: from hunger, fear, and hopelessness in everyday life. This may also be due to a desire for the preservation of the individual in a modern, mass society. In one of his poems, as the poet Samar Sen examines city life, he realises the boredom involved in it:

Our sleep ends
As the distorted day dawns from the night's
poisoned blood;
The sky grows heavy,
Tuned in our boring work, exhaustion,
The hooter blows.
Behind us roar the fast buses . . .

With his faith challenged by danger and insecurity, the poet is caught by a primitive desire of self-preservation which he expresses with a brutal directness:

. . . Brahma, Jesus, Ramakrishna,
In time I trust them all;
Yet, in dangerous days, unnaming worries,
In my unsteady wits
I trust only the straight simple words:
Nothing so lasting as a heavy purse.

He ends the poem with the following lines, which reach to the essence of modernity:

I am the greatest truth of all,
Nothing beyond.

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Marianne Moore

Two Fables of La Fontaine

BOOK THREE

FABLE I

THE MILLER, HIS SON, AND THE ASS

An aptitude for art, birthright of ancient Greece
Made fables possible, bequeathing us some of these;
Even so, irrespective of what we have read,
A few gleanings may still be harvested.
Given the wilderness of fancy anywhere,
Every author finds himself a discoverer.
Now here is a tale ingeniously constructed
For young Racan whom Malherbe as it were adopted—
Both heirs as well as rivals of Horace's lyre,
Apollo's sons, each a master whom we admire.
Exchanging inmost thoughts and queries when alone,
Since sure they would not be disturbed by anyone,
Racan began, "Might I ask if not a liberty,
That you tell me for you have seen life thoroughly,
And by now have come to know its every turning
As well as all I shall eventually be learning,
What course to pursue, now that I must choose at once.
You have known me well and my every circumstance.
Shall I live in the country, perhaps become a squire?
Try the army? Might court life be what I require?
Life has its bitterness and its beatitudes:
Marriage can drive you mad; war has its interludes.
If I did as I please, I'd know how to proceed.
But to friends, court, and the public, one must concede."
"You would please them all!" said Malherbe. "Quite unsound.
Consider this story in which my answer is found.

"In what book I can't say—I was reading casually—
A miller and his son just short of maturity—
Not more than fifteen if I'm trustworthy there,
Had a donkey to sell and were going to the fair.
That the beast might seem fresh and show agility,
They cat-cradled his legs to a limb from a tree
And carried him suspended as though a chandelier:
Pathos personified, the poor pair were so queer!

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The first person met, laughed until his sides ached
And asked, 'What is the farce they are going to act?
It's not the ass this time, who really is the dunce.'
The miller saw the point of the insult at once,
Set longears on his feet and bade the beast proceed.
It complained in its dialect. Contented on that score,
The miller with son riding, was plodding as before,
Passed by three rich merchants they seemed to annoy.
The oldest of them called out as loud as he could to the boy:
'My oh my; get down, my fine youth, it is not just
That your old gray lackey follow in the dust!
Ride and have him walking? This must be corrected.'
The miller said,—'Good sirs, I'll do as you've directed.'
The younger bade the elder mount to meet the plaint,
Till three girls came along. One said, ' 'Twould try a saint;
A monster of injustice up there if you ask me—
Grizzled Bishop Bones with an air of majesty—
At ease while his son walks! You'd think he'd have some pride.'
—'At ease,' said the miller, 'And why should years not ride?
The back's the best part of a goose. Be off. You heard.'
After more cross-firing and flinging back of a word,
Old age took heed and had the younger riding too—
Scarcely thirty steps till a third three came in view,
Who taunted the pair thus: 'Uneducated boors!
Beating an ass to death however much he endures:
Thin him down till he's merely a starved drudge's skin,
Goading an old friend who has served year out year in;
Perhaps sell his drubbed hide at the fair when he drops.'
—'Bless me,' said the miller, 'there's a point at which one stops.
Exhausting oneself trying to do as folk desire;
Accommodate oneself to the world and his sire?
Even patience gives out.' For fear the ass collapse,
The two then dismounted and walked some yards perhaps
When they met someone else who said, 'Is it the mode
For the ass to take his ease and master tramp the road?
Ought it to be the ass or man whom toil abases?
Asses since such rareties, merit crystal cases;
Conserving donkey-bones although their shoes wear thin.
Not Nicholas as he journeyed to Jeanne whom he hoped to win,
On his donkey as in the song handed down from antiquity.
A trio of donkeys.' The miller said, 'I agree.
On my soul you are right for once, and I say so:
Hereafter accord me a blessing or a blow,
Be content or be rasped, till your patience is gone:
I shall do as I please,' and he did from then on.

"As for you, go to war; court kings' or Love's bans;
Live agog and a-flutter; be a squire who will not dance;
Politician, functionary; monk; have wife or none;
The world will be carping, no matter what you've done."

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BOOK TWELVE

FABLE XVIII

THE FOX AND THE TURKEYS

Baiting a fox who'd spring in air,
Some turkeys had perched in a tree, their citadel.
The furred foe was trotting up near and circling far,
    Scanning each feathered sentinel;
Then snarled: "How now! I, set at naught by turkey-cocks!
Shallow gobblers defy an experienced fox!
Never, by all the gods, no"; and caught them as will appear.
The moon glared so white that his every move was clear;
The birds could see as plainly as if it were noon,
Yet he was used to vigils despite a brilliant moon,
With tricks in his bag to offset any plight.
His forepaws trod air as he made his body light;
He'd feign that death had cut him short, then in a flash would rise;
    Harlequin in each new disguise
    Was not so varied a multitude.
He'd willow out his tail like flame that sinks and flies;
    His effort knew no interlude;
He did so well not a turkey could close its eyes.
As he trotted to and fro, each over-weary bird
    Would stare till its scared eyes blurred.
The poor things held to the perch so dizzily
That one by one the flock fell; each was borne from the tree
To Master Fox's lair; he took nearly half of them home,—
Indeed had endless turkeys for his use.

Defeat is a thing which constant fear can induce.
    Beg for trouble and it will come.

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Comment

THE "GOOD AMERICAN"

I HAVE been haunted, ever since my return to the US from Italy, by the image of a typical discussion at the end of which, as inevitably as in a recurring dream, I find myself heated, shouting a little, defending America with a passionate self-righteousness I should like to disown. But it is a true recollection and I cannot disavow it. What *was* I doing, playing the earnest advocate, the patriot at bay—I who, by temperament and on principle, have always been a critic and dissenter; and who had hoped in Europe to open a dialogue based on fairness and moderation? I cannot say I was not forewarned. Before my departure, several friends had told me of their own experiences, of how they, too, had found themselves for the first time forced into the role of apologists and ambassadors extraordinary. But I did not take what they said quite seriously, understanding it as a figure of speech, a hyperbole to express their exasperation with European intellectuals.*

I was prepared to meet with frankness the Europeans who trotted out the conventional criticisms of our culture: to grant that some of us, many of us, indeed, are smug, boorish, conformist, contemptuous of what we do not understand, virtually cultureless. I was resolved not even to assert in protest what I have long known—that the average European has as little living connection with his country's traditional culture as any mid-west American farmer; for I knew that in Europe at least no one is proud of such ignorance; that the European is likely to be in regard to culture a pretentious hypocrite rather than a surly Pharisee. And this difference I was ready to admit was a European advantage.

I suppose I had not quite realised that the European intellectual would not, as we ourselves do, hate our failings in us, but rather hate us for those failings, taking our faults for our essence. And surely I assumed that no European would forget that he had, indeed, learned of our faults from us; that his current picture of our world had been transmitted to him by those American novelists, of the last century and this, for whom we share an admiration; so that the European observer notoriously sees, even when he visits us, only a fictional America, the world he has learned to expect from Melville and Hawthorne, from Dreiser or Sherwood Anderson or William Faulkner. I had hoped that the European intellectual, in this sense the heir of an American tradition of dissent, would think of us as a society almost pitifully eager to confess its faults, to measure and assess them in the world's eye.

I SHOULD have realised (and in a way did) that Europeans have an odd habit of reading our most poetic books as anthropological documents. I had seen in New York, for instance, several years ago, Sartre's melodrama, *The Respectful Prostitute*, and knew what happened when one took Faulkner's parochial symbols of universal human guilt and endurance as a factual account of life in the specific American South. But such disingenuous misunderstandings seemed to me then peripheral and comic.

At any rate, I did not quite understand how anyone could overlook the fact that the myth of a "Bitter America" (Emilio Cecchi, the inventor of the phrase, was a leading critic of our literature) was made in the United States by writers who are as real a part of us as the Snopses or Babbits whom they have created, and who, by these very creations, bear witness to a vigour and freedom of the imagination which is also America.

* I use "European intellectuals" in an extended sense on the basis of limited experience. My first-hand acquaintance with intellectuals abroad was largely confined to Italy, but I believe it applies, in one degree or another, to most of the other countries of Western Europe—though not, I should say, to Great Britain.

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I had even hoped that my own small heterodoxies might serve as evidence that not all Americans think alike out of ignorance or choice or abject surrender. But I soon realised that any unorthodox comment I might make would be taken solely as testimony against my country, though I might personally be credited with a courage to which I had no claim. Whatever willingness I disclosed in conversation with my European acquaintances to admit vice or inadequacy in American society was most often regarded not as a sign that America still fostered in some of us the critical intelligence but as an indication of almost superhuman virtue on my part. Such evidence of virtue would be greeted with overt praise, and not a little concealed contempt; for I would have become not only a hero but also an accomplice —my off-the-cuff comments carefully distorted and filed away among the anti-American stereotypes of my auditors. It is only too easy to become the "Good American" of the anti-American Europeans; all one has to do is to talk before them precisely as one has always talked among friends at home, critically, sceptically, bitterly.

But the "Good" in "Good American" has exactly the tone and weight of the same adjective applied to the "Good Jews" of the anti-Semite. One is good in so far as he is different, i.e., not really a Jew or an American, not really the unmodifiable legendary figure of contempt. The anti-Americanism of many European intellectuals has reached the stage where it is almost immune to facts. An automatic selector has been built into the stereotype which thus becomes self-sustaining and everlasting. The lowest common denominator of tourist making his expected gaffes, the American soldier abroad hailing all foreigners with a "Hey, boy!"— these count because they fit; but the American intellectual, the writer abroad who rejects the label of expatriate, the very novelists who have won universal acclaim, these somehow do not matter, except as they are willing to testify to the depravity of their country.

Some Americans (especially the young, whose own America is as mythic as that of their European friends) submit to the role imposed upon them, flattered by the social success it brings, and by the sense of belongingness that costs only a willingness to bear witness on demand. But most American intellectuals will not abide so ignoble an exploitation; and they fall into the counter-strategy of patriotic defence. It takes only a little while to bring to the surface of one's mind the virtues of his society, which he has, behind all criticism, always taken for granted: its hostility to hypocrisy, its eternal discontent.

He finds quickly that most Europeans are not only ignorant of these virtues but choose to remain so. A sufficiently platitudinous comment on our simplicity and animal vigour, or on the nastiness of McCarthy, is perfectly acceptable. But a favourable remark on the structure of our courts, or an unfavourable one on such legendary victims of them as Alger Hiss or the Rosenbergs brings forth the supercilious smile, the unspoken but unmistakable rejoinder, "Propaganda!" Even literary remarks may stir suspicion; a derogatory word about the style of Theodore Dreiser or the criticism of F. O. Matthiessen, an unfavourable comment on a Negro poet, and one is labelled an apologist or the dupe of apologists. It is at this point that the shouting properly begins!

One soon learns that it is unwise to be polite about the most hackneyed and apparently harmless observation. Grant without qualification that American soldiers are ignorant, unacquainted with *The Scarlet Letter* and *Moby Dick*, and your interlocutor will follow up by observing in a conspiratorial tone, "It's easy for us [*us*!] to understand how such barbarians can be persuaded to use germ warfare against Korean peasants!" Or admit the abuses of congressional investigating committees, and you will be expected to grant that the United States has resigned from Western civilisation. One must refuse the gambit, protest loudly from the start.

To be sure, shouting is undignified and it solves no ultimate problems; but it leads to some interesting disclosures, perhaps clears the atmosphere which stifles real discussion. When you have cried out at last in exasperation, "What's the matter with you people! Why has the blind criticism of America become for you an obligatory assertion of your independence, while criticism of Russia is considered evidence of cowardice and venality? Surely when you compare the two countries . . ." —your European opposite number does not even let you finish.

"Naturally, there is no comparison," he tells you. "The Soviet Union has nothing in

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common with us. But America, now! When we criticise America, we are criticising ourselves. Culturally you represent the most advanced stage of what we are all fast becoming."

Now one knows that this is, in a sense, true. American serious literature among the intellectuals, American mass culture among the people moves inexorably into Europe. The Americanisation of cultural life on all levels is a complement to, perhaps a cause of, anti-Americanism.

"Why do you make your forecast so sadly?" one asks his European friends. "Under our system you will survive. You will be harassed by movies, television, the comic books; but you will be permitted to fight back and you may win in the end. Under the Soviet system of mass culture, you would have to choose among conformism, silence, or death!"

"Would the death of an intellectual be so terrible an event?" Your interlocutor gives you his most cynical and pityingly European smile.

Here is the give-away, the clue to why anti-Americanism has become a psychological necessity to many Europeans. The self-distrust of the intellectuals, their loss of faith in their function and in the value of their survival, blends with the Marxist dogma that one's own bourgeoisie (if you are a bourgeois, yourself!) is the worst enemy. Conditioned by this principled self-hatred, the European intellectual finds it hard to forgive America for being willing and able to let him live; and even harder to forgive himself for knowing that he could be, in our "McCarthy-ridden" land, if not happy at least unhappy in his customary way. Both these resentments he takes out on a mythicised image of all he hates, which he calls America.

It should be clear that even as self-hatred such a feeling is impure. For the European intellectual ends up via his anti-Americanism hating in himself and his world only what can be called "America," which is to say, "the Other." In the end, anti-Americanism of this type permits the European to indulge simultaneously in self-hatred and self-righteousness. So handy a psychological device is not readily surrendered.

Yet unless it be surrendered, unless the European intellectual learns to see the menace as well as the promise of his future not in a legendary America but in his actual self, self-pity will answer self-righteousness on both sides of the Atlantic—and we will delay yet longer in taking up that dialogue between the European and American intellectual upon which the solution of our problems, cultural and political, in part depends. Perhaps for now a real basis for disagreement is all we can hope to find; but certainly it is better for us to shout at each other in the same world rather than to smile condescendingly from our several nightmares.

Leslie A. Fiedler

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Communications

REASON IN POLITICS

SIR—There are fashions in ladies' hats, men's beards, cooking utensils, chairs, politics, and political thought. I do not like fashionable ladies, fashionable chairs, or fashionable art, and I have a profound mistrust of fashionable thought. A plain woman who covers her mouth with lipstick and her nails with red enamel in 1954 does not become beautiful nor did a beautiful woman who didn't in 1854 become plain. "Modern" art of 1954 is not good because it is modern any more than what was "modern" art in 1854 was good because it was modern, yet the critics who review books, films, pictures, and music in our daily and weekly papers seem to assume that anything which is not the last word in modernity is negligible, unless, of course, it is so old as to be again in the fashion. So too with history, political science, and politics, truth is not determined by the latest fashion in dogma or doctrine of Moscow or Washington or by the latest fashion in theory of Oxford and Cambridge—it is not even determined by the most up-to-date columnist or political journalist.

As regards reason, it is completely out of date, like crinolines or top-hats. No one has a good word to say for it; it is expelled with a fork by "modern" psychologists, "modern" historians, and all the bright young men who tell us weekly what politically is exactly what. Reading them I sometimes murmur to myself what the now unfashionable Horace wrote of nature, "*Naturam expellas furca tamen usque recurret*"—nature or reason, you may expel either of them with a fork, yet they will always somehow, somewhere or other, turn up again. Reason, of course, turns up all the time in the mouths and books of those who deny it; in thousands of words they give us innumerable and most complicated reasons for disbelieving in the existence, effect, or efficiency of reason. Surely it is a little suspicious when a preacher never, under any circumstances, practises what he preaches.

Mr. Koestler's article, "A Guide to Political Neuroses," in the November issue, is a very good example of the fashionable attitude towards political rationality. Before I explain where in my opinion he goes wrong in this article, I should like to say that I have the highest admiration for everything of his which I have read. He has an original mind and a fine imagination and power of words, and he hardly ever writes anything which does not illumine with a very strange and vivid light some corner of the field of existence. Even in this article in which he is following a false trail he has on the way some very interesting and important things to say.

He is on a false trail because he is mistaking a half-truth for the whole truth. This oversimplification of history, politics, and human psychology is universal among the modern antirationalists and makes their picture of the human mind and of human society absurdly one-sided. Mr. Koestler's thesis is that (a) men are not politically rational, (b) 20th century men are political neurotics, (c) the view of "liberal" or "progressive" historians and political thinkers that the individual is politically sane and rational is false and leads to democracies always being at a disadvantage, both physically and psychologically, when opposed to totalitarian states. The main body of his article is devoted to proving this thesis by showing that Germans, French, and Britons are politically neither sane nor rational, that their judgements and actions are not influenced by facts or reason, but by deep-seated neuroses similar to those of neurotic or insane patients revealed by Freud and Freudian psychoanalysts.

There is, as I have indicated already, a certain amount of truth—and not unimportant truth—in this vision of modern political man and society. But it is ridiculously one-sided and oversimplified. It is based upon a curious oversimplification and misunderstanding of Freud and of the working of the human mind according to Freudian theory. Mr. Koestler maintains that just as Freud has shown us that every individual is complex-ridden, twisted, neurotic, and irrational because he is sexually inhibited, repressed, and thwarted, so too the same mechanism of repression and complexes produce in all of us political neuroses. But Freud does not say anything of the sort; he does not say that inhibition

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and repression and the thwarting of libido inevitably produce irrationality and neurosis. On the contrary, it is only inhibition, repression, transference, and sublimation which produce the sane, rational, "civilised" man or woman. Large numbers of persons learn successfully to control, thwart, repress their libido, and their beliefs, desires, and actions are determined by a familiar and complicated mixture of reason and unreason. They are not, in the correct sense of the word, neurotics, for a neurosis is a pathological condition in which the neurotic individual has not successfully accomplished the repressions, transferences, and sublimations which alone enable us to coordinate reason and unreason in our minds and so adjust ourselves to the exigencies of human society.

Mr. Koestler is led by this false analogy to make much too sweeping statements about the political neuroses of Germans, French, and British, e.g. that the "vast majority" of Germans are afflicted with a guilt complex or that "the mental structure of present-day France is built on delusion and self-delusion" or that "the British" are "impervious to reality." History and the human mind are much more complicated than that, and Mr. Koestler misses the complications by making his statements at one moment much too wide and at the next much too narrow. Of course, some Germans are afflicted with a guilt complex, but so are some Frenchmen, some Englishmen, and even some Russians, and there is no evidence at all that more Germans are afflicted with this psychology pathologically than persons of other nationalities. Again, we all to some extent suffer from delusions and shut out of our minds some aspects of reality, and Mr. Koestler's gargantuan statements about the psychology of Frenchmen and Britons are too exaggerated to explain anything.

Sainte-Beuve, in one of his causeries, noted with approval a remark of that "judicieuse *Logique de Port-Royal*" that "la plupart des erreurs des hommes viennent moins de ce qu'ils raisonnent mal en partant de principes vrais, que de ce qu'ils raisonnent bien en partant de jugements inexacts ou de principes faux." Though Freud has certainly added to our knowledge of the human mind since they speculated in the Abbey of Port-Royal on logic and psychology, the modern antirationalist might do well to consider this remark in relation to the political behaviour of human beings. It contains a very important truth. The mind of modern man is an extraordinary mixture of reason and unreason. In the irrational part of his mind are to be found emotions, desires, instincts, some of his beliefs—much of this in or connected with the unconscious part of his mind. Nearly all men's conscious beliefs and actions, if not all of them, are to some extent determined by these irrational emotions, instincts, desires, and beliefs. But they are also determined by his reason, and his "errors," as the Port-Royalists saw, are not the result of his irrationality but of the relation between the rational and irrational parts of his mind.

Most people most of the time are in fact rational persons and act rationally. If they have an irrational desire for beer, they use their reason in order to satisfy their desire and, after a computation of consequences, rationally decide that, though they would like another glass, it is better not to drink it. And though a man's original desire to murder his father has been repressed, but still exists in his unconscious, he has now adjusted himself to civilisation and has transferred it into a rational dislike of his boss. Both these cases are quite common; in neither is the person completely rational, yet it would be ludicrous to deny that he acts rationally or that his actions are determined by his reason. On the other hand, you may go into a hospital for the insane and will probably find there a man who believes himself to be Napoleon or Jesus Christ, a belief which may quite possibly have originated in his hatred of and sense of inferiority towards his father. On the assumption that he is Napoleon, he acts quite rationally; but unfortunately for him he is mistaken and we have to shut him away. His error, as the Port-Royalists saw, comes from reasoning correctly from a false premise.

At the two ends of the scale, sanity and insanity or rationality and irrationality are easily distinguishable, e.g. the man who looks up the time of a train in the ABC in order to get to Manchester at 2.30 p.m. is sane and rational, while the man who acts on the belief that he is Napoleon is mad and irrational. But there is no sharp dividing line between the sane and the insane, the reasonable and the irrational—there are borderline cases. The cause of this is the fact that the mind of everyone contains a mixture of reason and unreason, and that sanity and what we call rational behaviour consist in or depend on a balance —often a complicated and delicate balance—between the two. That is why all sweeping statements about men being either rational or irrational and all vast generalisations about men behaving in one way or the other are absurd. This applies to political behaviour even more than to individual behaviour, to our thoughts and actions in our everyday life. The questions whether one should drink another glass of beer or murder one's father are comparatively simple, and are decided by the vast majority of us in a way which is obviously—on balance—

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rational. The question of how the individual German ought to behave politically when a Hitler is in power and putting millions of Jews to death is infinitely more difficult and complicated. But so also is the question—which Mr. Koestler seems to regard as quite simple—whether the danger of war can be averted by each nation piling up its own armaments. And so too, to go still further down the scale, is the question whether Great Britain should join the European Defence Community or the question whether the policy of the Conservative Government in Africa should be supported.

A moment's examination of Mr. Koestler's examples from which he tries to prove the existence of political neuroses will show how much more complicated political psychology is than he thinks. For instance, as a proof of the British being politically neurotic because they are impervious to reality he tells a story of how in London during the blitz at a meeting of the PEN Club "a crumpled, tweedy, lovable little man" was attacking modern novelists for their "morbid preoccupation with violence." He had just said: "Now, as a matter of fact, ordinary people rarely meet with violence in their lives," when a bomb crashed down on a block of houses not far away. "The little man," says Mr. Koestler, "waited patiently for the next lull, then calmly continued: 'What I mean to say is, violence rarely plays a part in ordinary people's lives. . . .'" This is, according to Mr. Koestler, an example of a refusal to face reality. But surely it is Mr. Koestler who in this case is the neurotic; the little man was perfectly right. Despite the falling of bombs about his head at that particular moment, he was maintaining a correct balance between the irrational fear and his reason and refusing to allow fear to distort his knowledge of facts. And the facts were that in 1941 the ordinary man of say forty years of age had, except during a few years of war, rarely met with violence in his life. This was certainly true of Britons, Americans, Scandinavians, Frenchmen, Dutch, Belgians, Swiss.

To sum up: all our thoughts, beliefs, and actions are the result of mental processes which are partly irrational and partly rational. Most people most of the time maintain a balance between the two which justifies us in saying that they are thinking and acting rationally. If, for instance, you discuss with ordinary English or French people a political question, you find that the vast majority consider it rationally and reasonably. Their conclusions may be wrong, not because they do not reason or do not reason correctly, but either because the premises from which they start—often in the irrational part of their mind—are false or because the problem is too complicated for them. The curious thing is that although individually we are politically so rational, our politics—e.g. our national beliefs and actions—are so hopelessly irrational. History, certainly modern history, is a record of insane communal acts performed or authorised by eminently sane individuals. The antirationalists, instead of making sweeping statements about the irrationality of human beings, should investigate the causes of this strange and complicated phenomenon.

LEONARD WOOLF

London, W.C.2

[Mr. Koestler comments: Leonard Woolf's opening blast against "the young and fashionable" seems to me wasted as, to my regret, I do not qualify as a target. Nor am I an antirationalist who wishes to throw out reason with a pitchfork. The opposite is true: I am hopelessly in love with political reason, and my article was a lover's lament. If it appeared to contain "sweeping statements" this was not my intention, but when one tries to spotlight a generally neglected aspect of a problem, one unavoidably lays oneself open to that kind of charge. The neglected aspect was in this case the psychiatric approach to politics; and since I have expressly said that "no psychiatrist can cure poverty and disease," and have warned against "underestimating the importance of economic factors and social pressures," I don't think that the charge of substituting a half-truth for the whole truth is justified. As for Freud, I think that both Leonard Woolf and I have understood him quite well, but Leonard Woolf thinks that I haven't. His objection seems to boil down to the truism that the conflict between instinct and civilised restraint does not lead to neurosis if sublimation occurs. I agree. But where on earth do you see signs of sublimating the political libido in this age of Hitler, Stalin, and McCarthy?

These are minor points. On all major points I agree with Leonard Woolf's letter more than he realises. Particularly with the end, where he says: "The curious thing is that although individually we are politically so rational, our politics—e.g. our national beliefs and actions—are so hopelessly irrational."

After gently chiding me through five columns, Mr. Woolf ends up by repeating, in an admirably concise form, exactly what I said.]

WRITING COMMUNIST HISTORY

SIR—It is a privilege to be reviewed by Dr. Borkenau. If my book, *The Pattern of Communist*

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Revolution, has done no more than provide an occasion for him to elaborate his views, which never fail to stimulate, it has been worth writing; but his article raises some points of interpretation, the discussion of which might be of interest to your readers.

I agree with him that the differences between the Communist impact in undeveloped and industrial countries and the role of the revolutionary intelligentsia have been pointed out before. I have even been writing about them myself for the last eight years, and I had hoped that in this and previous works I had acknowledged my debt to such writers as Benjamin Schwartz, Guy Wint, and M. N. Roy, not to mention the numerous historians of the Russian revolutionary movement. Even so, Dr. Borkenau perhaps overrates the extent to which these issues are understood in the West, and I believe that there is still plenty of room for further study and further comparisons in this field.

On the other hand I am convinced that Dr. Borkenau exaggerates the importance of the intellectuals in Communist movements in Anglo-Saxon countries. These people get a lot of publicity, but their effective influence is negligible. Such power as the British Communists have—and it is not much—comes from their positions in the trade unions. In the United States and Canada, Communism can hardly be said to exist. The possible importance of intellectuals as spies for the Soviet government is another matter. But this is not a political or social problem but one for counter-espionage experts, and as such was excluded from the scope of my book.

Dr. Borkenau may be right about Germany in 1923 and Spain in 1937. He was an eye-witness of these events. But the difference between us is essentially one of emphasis.

Though I am a resolute opponent of the widespread view that Soviet policy is "just Russian imperialism in a new form," I suggest that it is going too far to deny that strategic factors have played a part in Soviet and Comintern policy. With regard to my treatment of Bulgaria, it is Dr. Borkenau who is "wayward," not I. The event which I related to Kemal's rapprochement with the West (on p. 103) was not "the blowing up of Sofia cathedral in 1925" (which gets one sentence on p. 108), but the armed rising of September, 1923. At this time the conflict between Trotsky and the triumvirate was only latent, and Zinoviev's position within the triumvirate was certainly not shaken. Dr. Borkenau's argument thus falls to the ground, nor do I think his view about "an active anti-Russian coalition" in the Danube Basin corresponds to the diplomatic situation of either 1923 or 1925.

As for France in 1944, I agree with Dr. Borkenau that there was a conflict within the French Communist ranks as to whether an attempt should be made to seize power by force, and it seems quite possible that this conflict reached up as high as the French party's Politburo. The same was perhaps broadly true of the Greek party in 1944. But that this proves the existence of a division in the Soviet Politburo on international Communist policy I cannot see, and to identify Zhdanov as protagonist of the extremist point of view is still more rash.

This brings me to Dr. Borkenau's main point. That rivalries have existed and do exist within the Soviet Politburo there can be no doubt. That the conflicts between personalities tend to fuse with the conflicts between policies is equally clear. This is, however, not the same thing as saying that it is always the personal quarrel that *causes* clashes or changes of policy. The interrelationship is more complicated than that. I entirely agree with Dr. Borkenau that we have to get our evidence on Soviet policy from the study of personal careers as well as from the study of political and ideological debate. I always read with interest such articles of Nicolaevsky as come my way, and the contributions of Meissner in *Osteuropa* (both mentioned by Dr. Borkenau), as well as some of the original sources on which their ideas are based. My book, however, was primarily concerned with the Communist movement, and to a lesser extent with what seemed to me the basic trends of the Soviet régime. If I had been trying to write a detailed history of the Soviet Union, I should of course have had to discuss personal rivalries in the post-Yezhov era. But as Dr. Borkenau has raised the subject of Zhdanov, there are some things I should like to say.

It is certain that Zhdanov was one of the top bosses, that he played a big part in international Communist policy, that through his control of the Directorate of *Agitprop* he was the cultural dictator of the Soviet Union, and that he built himself a political machine in the Party and Soviet organs in Leningrad. It is also certain that after his death—which may not have been natural—Leningrad was purged, and *Agitprop* was demoted from the status of a Directorate of the Central Committee to that of a mere Department. But I know no evidence which conclusively shows either that Zhdanov stood for a more extremist international policy than Stalin, or that Zhdanov's way of dealing with writers and composers and philosophers was his own and not Stalin's. In short, we know there was a struggle for power, in which Zhdanov was engaged, and that

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someone purged his followers when he was dead. But we do not know with which issues of policy the personal struggle was fused, or even who was the moving spirit behind the purging of the Zhdanovites —though I suggest that the best guess on the last point would be Stalin himself.

With great respect to that attractive personality, General Vukmanovic-Tempo, a valiant conspirator and soldier and economic boss, I feel bound to regard his views of 1950 on the Greek civil war in 1944 and 1946 with some reserve. As for Zhdanov's job in Finland, there is no mystery. He was appointed Head of the Allied (Soviet) Control Commission in Finland, just as his Politburo colleague Voroshilov was appointed Head of the similar body in Hungary. Neither appointment was a disgrace. Zhdanov did not spend much time in Helsinki. As boss of Leningrad, it was natural that Zhdanov should have a decisive influence on Soviet policy towards Finland, just as in 1940 he had played a leading part in the liquidation of the Baltic Republics. But the interesting thing is that Zhdanov impressed all Finns who had dealings with him by his moderation and "correctness," and that Moscow treated Finland so differently from Czechoslovakia. This hardly fits the picture of Zhdanov-the-extremist, the bolsheviser-at-all-costs.

Finally a few words on methods of studying Communism. At the risk of being thought a narrow-minded Scottish empiricist, I would respectfully suggest that Dr. Borkenau has a large dose of Danubian either-or-ism. *Either* one must study personal quarrels *or* problems of policy, *either* economic factors *or* political, *either* strategic *or* social. *Either* one must be a scholar *or* one must speculate. But surely one must study *all* aspects. Totalitarianism is indivisible. Those of us in this country who are trying seriously to study Soviet and Communist affairs—and I am not necessarily thinking of those who have the biggest popular reputations as experts—are at least aware of the different aspects, though we certainly do not claim fully to understand them. We have to have our working hypotheses, and if that is "speculation" then I am unashamedly a speculator. But we have to examine and re-examine our hypotheses in the light of facts, relying not on revelations of esoteric truth, but on plain reason. Reason is reason, and mystification is mystification, from China to Peru. There are three kinds of hypotheses—those supported by so many facts that they can be considered proven, those which merely fit such facts as are known, and those which conflict with known facts. The first group can be accepted, the last must be rejected. The second group must not be confused with either the first or the third, and must be treated with care and restraint. To make this distinction is not "being scholarly": it is just plain sense.

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CHINA IN THE U.N.?

SIR—From Woodrow Wyatt's remarks, in the November ENCOUNTER, it seems that the illusion still persists in Britain and elsewhere that US opposition to the admission of Communist China to the UN is not an expression of the national will but an ephemeral, emotional attitude dictated by a nebulous pressure-group called "The China Lobby." May I claim some of your valuable space to express what I believe is a not untypical American opinion on this subject?

The main objections to the seating of Communist China which move American public opinion do not arise from the so-called "China Lobby." In so far as there ever was anything resembling a "lobby," it did not consist of businessmen, most of whom are as anxious to resume trade with Communist China as their British counterparts. Its base is, rather, among the clergy. China was the greatest of all American missionary fields. These missionaries, it must be remembered, did excellent welfare and relief work in China, and it is they who are largely responsible for the American public's traditional friendliness towards China. The first-hand reports of the abominable tortures (using this term literally) they have experienced, have nauseated and angered American opinion.

Another special source of opposition to Communist China was the Republican Party, which attacked Secretary Acheson's China policy as the weakest link in the administration's foreign policy record; and however exaggerated or unfair some of the attacks may have been, on the whole it was a perfectly legitimate attitude for a political opposition party, especially since the Republicans were not consulted on China as they were on Europe, as Senator Vandenberg repeatedly emphasised.

Until the Chinese intervention in the Korean war, therefore, the opposition to Communist China was partly a political issue, partly a religious and moral issue. But after the Chinese intervention the opposition became virtually unanimous.

The best proof of this present unanimity is the petition against the admission of Communist China

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to the UN that has just been presented to President Eisenhower. Among the steering committee for securing of signatures are Warren G. Austin, US Ambassador to the UN under Roosevelt and Truman; Joseph C. Grew, Under-Secretary of State under Roosevelt; Senator John Sparkman, Democratic candidate for Vice-President; Governor Charles Edison, former Secretary of the Navy under Roosevelt; Congressman Walter Judd, for ten years a medical missionary in China; Congressman John McCormack, Democratic floor-leader in the House; and General Marshall.

The American objections do not arise from Chinese aggression in Korea alone, nor the status of the Chinese communities in Malaya, Indonesia, and Indo-China, nor the strategic importance of Formosa, nor our desire to encourage any effort by our traditional friends, the Chinese people, to free themselves from a tyranny which has murdered, by its own account, several millions—although all these reasons play a part. Above all, there is the torture and death of many thousands of American and Korean prisoners of war—about which the British press has been so strangely silent, and British opinion so strangely apathetic. Over several thousand American soldiers, after being taken prisoners of war, were brutally murdered by their captors. What, one wonders, if they had been British soldiers?

If the attempt to seat Mao's China in the UN should succeed, most Americans believe it would not bring peace, but it might destroy the UN. For the UN is supposed only to be open to "peace-loving states which accept the obligations contained in the present charter, and which in the judgement of the organisation are able and willing to carry out these obligations." One of these obligations, in the Preamble to the Charter, is "to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained."

The argument from precedent—that other Communist states were admitted to the UN—is invalid because that was done before their defiance of the Charter was clearly apparent. As Americans see it, the presence of some states which obstruct the true purpose of the UN is all the more reason not to add to their number.

The admission of Communist China would not only violate the letter of the Charter—and perhaps paralyse its machinery by a double Communist veto in the Security Council—but it would also surely stultify the UN's value and integrity in American eyes, for the American people regard the UN largely as a moral force for peace and justice.

As for the British argument that the Peiping government controls the vast Chinese mainland and that it is ridiculous for America to go on refusing to "recognise" this obvious fact, people forget that we have already "recognised" it to the extent of negotiating with the Chinese Communists for two and a half years in Korea. We are equally ready to negotiate on the broader aspects of peace in the Far East, once the Korean aggression is settled. As a matter of fact, the United States has already given more effective recognition to Peiping than Peiping has given to the British!

On the other hand, the admission of Communist China to the UN would amount to *de jure* recognition. There are innumerable precedents for withholding *de jure* recognition on political or moral grounds. The doctrine of non-recognition of governments which have come to power as a result of violence or foreign intervention was proclaimed and practised by the American government under Woodrow Wilson in Mexico, Charles Evans Hughes in Latin America, and Henry L. Stimson in the case of Manchukuo. The UN itself proclaimed and practised this doctrine against Franco Spain, with British support.

As for the hope of Titoism, Tito did not turn to the West because of any concessions we made to him, but first through fear of Soviet Russia, and later through fear of complete isolation between the two great power-groups. Not long before Tito defied Moscow in 1948, Britain and America pledged themselves to give both zones of Trieste to Italy. According to the British theory on China, this should have driven Tito further into Stalin's arms, yet this tough Anglo-American action was followed by Tito's partial reconciliation with the West. In the unlikely event that Mao, too, should be willing to break with Moscow, there would be infinitely more chance of his making the switch if he were *suffering* because of his alliance with Russia than if he were admitted to the UN *as a result* of his alliance with Russia.

CHRISTOPHER EMMET

New York City

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BOOKS

MALRAUX AND "THE VOICES OF SILENCE"

IT WAS in the home of Daniel Halévy that I had my first sight of him. He had just returned from China, by way of Moscow. In a small room crowded with people, a young man stood gesticulating; his pale, almost angelic face made ugly by a constant slight twitching: he chewed his cigarettes and pushed back nervously, again and again, a lock of hair that fell over his pale forehead. He spoke without a stop, if one could call speech the headlong torrent of words that poured from him without seeming able to overtake his thoughts. One sensed in him temper, courage, profound culture, and violent contact with actuality. He spoke of world politics, of the revolutionary struggle; he quoted Dostoevsky as if in a continual dialogue with him; he told us of Chiang Kai Shek's break with Moscow, throwing out provocative remarks between the sentences of his recital, such as: "It is a gross error, from the revolutionary point of view, not to kill off quickly the potential enemies of the revolution." Jean Guéhenno, shrinking under the impact of these words, wailed, half-aloud, "No, I could never be a Communist!"

That was André Malraux, actor in the Chinese revolution, precious ally of the Kremlin, later to be a hero of the Spanish civil war, the author of *Man's Fate* and *Man's Hope*, a *maquisard* arrested by—and then escaped from—the Gestapo, colonel in the French army during the liberation of his country, de Gaulle's Minister of Information, and now art historian of a unique kind, as his monumental *The Voices of Silence** testifies.

* *The Voices of Silence*. By ANDRÉ MALRAUX. Secker & Warburg. £6.

WHAT strikes one, first of all, in reading *The Voices of Silence*, is the shrillness of its tone, the very trait by which Malraux himself characterises all modern art. *The Voices of Silence* is not a work of calm and reasoned theory—it is an outcry. And yet we find in it an ability to pose problems with dramatic acuteness, a vast range and precision of learning, artistic sensitivity, a grasp of diverse sources of inspiration—the combination, in one huge book, of all those rare gifts we have come to expect of Malraux.

Malraux lays bare for his readers the truth of works of art so contradictory in their spirit that the effect of his analysis is to confer on us a total and terrible freedom. "The idea of art," he says, "having become completely open, can no longer be conceived in advance." And in demonstrating the kinship of modern art with the sacred arts of the past, he raises the central problem of the book—that of the resurrection, through modern abstract art, of whole continents of primitive or vanished art.

How greatly our imaginary museum has grown from Winckelmann in the 18th century to Malraux in the 20th! Sumerian art, the art of the prehistoric caves of Rhodesia and Altamira, the wrought metal figures of Siberia and the Ukraine, the masks and fetishes of primitive peoples, Chinese, Japanese, Cambodian, or Mexican painting—Malraux speaks of them with the same passion as of Michelangelo, Botticelli, Goya, Van Gogh, or Braque. Leafing through the book, one is brought up short by unexpected juxtapositions; a flat Soviet illustration for *Taras Bulba* and Grünewald's "Crucifixion," a Polish folk-sculpture of the Christ beside a straw mask of Indo-China,

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a Piero della Francesca beside a 12th century Buddhist fresco, the drawings of madmen beside the insipid paintings of Greuze, and, a few pages further on, Cézanne and Vermeer opposite the admirable head of a Javanese Siva.

Chaos and discord? Yes, but also profound confrontation, on a scale never before attempted.

MALRAUX seeks the kinship and contrast of these works of art, not in their themes—although he by no means neglects them—but in their style, their form. He is well aware that the form of a work of art, even at its most abstract, expresses something: a religious experience (the source of all the arts, with the exception of modern art), or the revolt against a civilisation that has lost even the ambition to create a hierarchy of values. But he is also aware that in the 19th century—Malraux dates the break from Manet on—the artist declared his independence of his subject-matter; it was not its theme, nor its fidelity to nature, that created the value of a work of art, but the pure play of colours and forms.

As a matter of fact, the possible independence of art from the thing represented was sensed obscurely by many earlier artists, but in someone like Vermeer (according to Malraux) it was a kind of "secret knowledge." Constable and Delacroix did not like to exhibit their sketches, preferring to keep them for themselves. Two versions of a "Pietà" by Delacroix illustrates this fact; how much more beautiful than the final picture is the admirable draught. Many similar examples can be cited. Since the artists have become conscious of the fact, and have accepted its ultimate consequences, the break between the artist and the art-lover has become a chasm. It is from this time that one can date the appearance of a line of miserable, eccentric artists, outcasts from society—or odd rentiers like Cézanne, who have only one goal and one ideal: Art, as an absolute.

"In order to speak in their new idiom, they accepted misery as a matter of course. From Baudelaire to Verlaine, from Daumier to Modigliani, how many human sacrifices! Rarely have so many great artists offered so many sacrifices to an unknown god. . . . None of them spoke of truth, although all, before the works of their adversaries, spoke of imposture. From this time on, the doomed painter establishes himself in history. Fascinated henceforth by his own absolute, the artist finds in his own damnation the source of an unparalleled fruitfulness. . . ."

MALRAUX returns again and again to one question: Whom or what does modern art serve? In the name of what unknown god, Malraux asks himself, in pages crowded with the reproductions of fetishes, gods, and demons, have so many generations of artists, madmen, and unfortunates made so many sacrifices?

Saint Paul in Athens—"his spirit was stirred in him," as we can read in the Acts of the Apostles, "when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry"—spoke one day to the Athenians who "spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing" (it is like a description of the Café des Deux Magots at *apéritif* time). He said to them, "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, To The Unknown God. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you."

Malraux is not Saint Paul revealing to the Athenians this unknown God; he is one of the inhabitants of that city full of idols—but the one who thirsts most, perhaps, for knowledge of the divinity. He sees the history of Europe as a continuous deterioration, for the last few centuries, of the union of man with the divine. He perceives and makes plain the slow, continuous degradation of that religious art which for thousands of years was the expression of man's contact with the absolute. Religious art becomes an illustration of piety, then propaganda for heaven (as Malraux characterises Jesuit art), to disappear completely at last, in our own time, from the horizon of the great creators.

In the more and more striking incapacity of man to give form to spiritual values, Malraux sees the proof of how far the extinction of religious feeling in humanity has gone. "Where the cathedral once sprang, one sees the miserable constructions of pseudo-Romanesque, pseudo-Gothic churches, modern churches where Christ is absent. . . . In our time the Mass has found the only setting worthy of it amid the barbed wire of the concentration camps. It is worth reflecting on the fact that Christianity, which in the West still

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keeps the death of a man from being merely death, and which alone gives it form, in the highest sense of the word, is no longer able to unite in its saintly figures the sense of communion and artistic quality."

Malraux extends these remarks to all the countries touched by the civilisation of the machine. "Islam, India, and China only conserve their religious forms where they have not been touched by that civilisation; but not in Cairo, or Bombay, or Shanghai. Yet they can find no other forms."

What is the meaning of modern art against this background, in which its highest values have been detached from the civilisation from which it springs? Why has modern art found its allies among the artists of "blood, stars, and night?" Why do the masks, the fetishes, and the images of strange gods seem so close to us today? Is this an accident?

No, Malraux answers. In a world which is losing its connection with the absolute, which can no longer be explained in terms of any traditional hierarchy of values, the artist has discovered a whole world of art inspired by a hierarchy of other values. The artists, in revolt against the forms of the civilisation in which they live, against the already degenerate realism of European art, seek a weapon among the forms most foreign to that civilisation. How many times have we not heard what Tahiti meant to Gauguin, and Negro masks to Vlaminck, Derain, and Picasso? The brutality of contrast in the colours of objects brought from Africa, the geometric simplifications of the masks, came as a liberation from the dogmas, not merely of the academies, but of the Impressionists as well. It seemed to the artists of that time that they had discovered in these forms an absolute creative liberty; though in reality the creators of these far-away models were themselves only the slaves of other rules.

And yet, is it so certain that the voice of Christianity is really moribund? Is the almost complete disappearance of the sacred from the horizon of major modern art really a decisive argument?

In the last analysis, does it not depend on ourselves not to be condemned, one day, either to the stereotypes of Soviet art (worthy successors of those of the Second Empire and the Third Republic), or to pastiches aping the works of the artists of "blood, stars, and night"? These last are dead or bogged down in fame and honours, beleaguered by thousands of epigones ("the lice in my hair," said Picasso). It is not the expression of an inner necessity that the epigones seek, but tricks and sensational novelties. It is not only to the language of Christianity that they turn a deaf ear, they have ceased to understand Rembrandt and Corot, if we are to judge by their works, adroitly copied from anthropological museums. Are these modern academicians any better than the older variety?

The reaction against this degradation, against this proliferation of art self-styledly "abstract," self-styledly "in revolt," seems to me to be taking form already. Perhaps it will express itself in an art less universal and less strident on the surface, nourished not by ethnographic museums but by the life and faith of the artist, by the world which surrounds him. Perhaps artists will begin to see faces again (the reactionaries!); perhaps through Soutine and Rouault they will arrive at Rembrandt; and through the visionary Rembrandt they will come to the Rembrandt who studied nature stubbornly and precisely (it is from this Rembrandt that the visionary Rembrandt springs). Perhaps Dürer and even Takanobu, whom Malraux has revealed to us, will be more important to them than Polynesian idols or the surprises of Miro; perhaps they will even have the courage to look at green trees and clouds with the tender humility of a Corot—the Corot who, returning to France from his studies in the Italian museums, exclaimed: "I will ask the sun of France how I should paint!"

For the devotees of Zen Buddhism, the contemplation of a painted landscape is a form of prayer. The painting, rolled in silk and kept in a metal tube, is unrolled and contemplated in silence, then returned to its sheath. There are workers in Tokyo, devotees of this sect, who leave the city in the autumn by train-loads. In the time of year when the leaves turn yellow and red, they seat themselves facing the tree-covered mountains—and the study of these landscapes are their devotions. One of the old Zen texts expresses their prayer: "We have seen clouds moving, birds on the wing, waters."

From the Acropolis to Angkor, from Villeneuve's "Pietà" to Rembrandt, Malraux finds that art has united us with the cosmos. Our

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own art today only shows us the break between man's consciousness and its roots. It is not for nothing that Malraux's generation has been affected by the Dostoevsky of Ivan Karamazov, returning his entry ticket to paradise, and not the Dostoevsky of Alyosha or the monk Zossima, who said, "Love the birds and every living creature."

One of the central themes of Malraux's books is the attempt to wrench the reader out of the charmed circle of realism which has constituted European art from the Renaissance to the 19th century. By dozens of examples, drawn from primitive art, he demonstrates that art arose not from the study of nature or the attempt to copy the thing seen but from man's beliefs and his conception of the world (of the many examples he cites, only that of Altamira seems to me debatable). He even attempts to view the realism of the 19th century, Courbet for example, as above all a revolt against the "ideal beauty" inherited from David and Ingres, and not as a struggle to achieve fidelity to nature. But in stressing (rightly) an elementary truth for artists, the role of abstraction in art, in all art (and therefore, naturally, in Courbet's art), Malraux creates a misunderstanding; he minimises the equally important element of realism, that is, the desire to render what the artist sees. It is clear that art cannot exist without abstraction, but Malraux does not sufficiently stress the fact that, in time, the art that detaches itself from concrete observation becomes calligraphy, and that art, like Antæus, must renew its contact with the earth to keep its strength.

Who would dream of doubting that the magic of Corot or Chardin lies not only in their gift for rendering the Italian sky or the down of a peach but also (and above all) in the unique sonority of their colours and the purity of their composition? But it is difficult to call exactly these elements "abstracts," for they are so linked to the observation, the contemplation of the object, that the work of art becomes a sublimation of realism rather than a rupture with the real. According to the anti-realist theories, Leonardo noting the grimaces of passers-by or the arabesques of waves, Dürer composing that "work of art and new creation" (which, according to him, could only be attained by absorbing nature)—all that is only a stage of development superbly surmounted by a Miro!

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CHATTO & WINDUS

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It is the heroic age of Cubism, the more abstract movements that flowed from it, and the violent struggles of artists who grew great, not merely in the revolt against bourgeois civilisation, but in the revolt against nature itself, that gives Malraux's book its centre of gravity. It was not by absorbing that nature whose influence over Gauguin was still so strong (and how much stronger still over Manet) that they arrived at their vision, but by a headstrong will to create an art detached from, even ranged against it.

The pendulum movement of art in general, from abstraction to realism and back again, accelerated by history, has now created the greatest possible separation (between the 19th and 20th centuries) in the shortest time (through the passage from naturalism—and its pictorial form, impressionism—to cubism and its descendants of today). But does not Malraux exaggerate the significance of this limited movement towards abstraction? One does not wish to underestimate our present epoch; nevertheless, reading *The Voices of Silence*, one ends by acquiring the false impression that the works of Braque and Picasso (Braque seems closer to the writer's heart) are the final achievement for which all the artists who preceded them existed and worked, because only Braque and Picasso fully understood what the others had merely a presentiment of. Here we skirt the edges of a grave error. Corot's vision, for example, is not only fuller than, it is different in conception from post-Cubist abstraction. Malraux's argument, and the liberty with which he treats Corot's graphic work, cannot conceal the fact that abstraction in Corot is still, and always, a full and loving vision of nature—almost a form of prayer. And there is no essential difference in the attitude towards nature of a Corot, a Vermeer, or a Cézanne, of a Dürer or a Van Gogh.

Bonnard said one day to his old friend, the painter Pankiewicz, who, with age, had come to a more and more exclusive admiration of realism and the Italian Renaissance: "Abstract painting will be the salvation of painting." And Bonnard was right *at that time*. Now, a few dozen years later, it is possible to suggest that the precise and humble study of nature will be the salvation of painting, which, without it, can only dry up. It is already withering in the imitation of primitive art, in an abstract academism narrower than all previous academisms, deprived of sacred sources by an agnostic culture, while cut off from direct sensation and the constant study of nature.

Joseph Czapski

WHERE DO WE GO FROM NOWHERE?

THE BBC's Brains Trust is still alive enough in people's memories for all to remember Dr. Joad's first parrying of an awkward question: "It depends on what you mean by . . ." In those days many were those who thought that Joad's attitude was a trick to gain time. But how mistaken they were! They forgot that Joad was a philosopher; and, mind you, not just any philosopher of whom many can be found in every walk of life; but a professional philosopher, of the kind one can only come across in the most exclusive academic walks of the world, namely the walks in the campuses of the colleges of the United States and in the parks and quads of the colleges of England. This is very well put in the opening sentences of a new Penguin book I have just been reading: T. D. Weldon's *The Vocabulary of Politics*.* The quotation is long but worth its space:

> During the last century there has occurred a great change in the methods and aims of professional philosophers in this country and in the United States. . . . What has happened is that philosophers have become

* *The Vocabulary of Politics*. By T. D. WELDON. A Pelican Book published by Penguin Books Ltd. 2s.

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extremely self-conscious about language. They have come to realise that many of the problems which their predecessors have found insuperable arose not from anything mysterious or inexplicable in the world but from the eccentricities of the language in which we try to describe the world. Hence philosophers have largely ceased to put questions of the form "What is truth?" and "Do material things exist?" but ask instead "What kind of information is conveyed by the statement that a proposition is true or that material things exist?"

As an example of the kind of question that this change will raise, we read:

> Although the question "Is the political philosophy of democracy sound and that of communism unsound?" looks fairly straightforward and answerable, a little consideration shows that it is far from being clear and intelligible.

This is most remarkable. For if we were to ask any philosopher in the world, provided he were no professional one (British or American), whether the political philosophy of Jefferson is sounder than that of Stalin, the chances are that he would unashamedly answer: "Yes: since the first leads to Eisenhower quarrelling with McCarthy, and the second to Malenkov liquidating Beria." But he would be wrong, hopelessly wrong. The aim of this book is to show that though the Americans have one set of institutions that lead to Eisenhower quarrelling with McCarthy and the Russians another set that lead to Malenkov liquidating Beria, no foundations of political obligations exist at all and "all attempts to demonstrate the superiority of the foundations on which democracy rests to those of communism and totalitarianism are pointless." So that we are left with the comforting thought that, though we live better in the colleges of Oxford than in the concentration camps of Karaganda, it certainly cannot be due to the fact that our beliefs are sounder or better founded than those of the Bolsheviks; it just happened that way, instead of the other way about, which it might easily have done; and when we fondly imagine that our institutions are what they are because our beliefs shaped them so, we are the victims of an illusion which can be easily cured by a course in logical analysis.

WHAT then is this logical analysis which can so serenely equate Kolima and Karaganda with Princeton and Oxford, and Truman with Stalin? You pull me up and protest: "Surely you are exaggerating a bit, aren't you?" Very good. Let us quote:

> Nevertheless the philosopher king is a helpful supplement to the notion of political foundations. As we have seen, these are necessarily vague and abstract. They have to be translated into actual legislation, and it looks as if some special skill is needed to do this. Hence the notion of the semi-divine or inspired legislator is always useful. Lycurgus, Stalin and the Supreme Court of the United States have all been cast for this part though the foundations they have accepted look widely different. Sometimes on the other hand it appears that identical foundations are appealed to in support of diametrically opposed policies. To take an instance at random, President Truman, addressing the Foreign Ministers of the American Republics on March 26th 1951, asserted that "the two principles which had long been the basis of relations between the American Republics were a belief that 'international affairs should be based upon co-operation among free and independent nations, and not upon coercion or force,' and a conviction that 'the aim and purpose of government is to promote the welfare of all the people—not just the privileged few.'" There is nothing here to which any representative of the Soviet Union would take exception, yet Truman

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and Stalin were not agreed as to policy. This confirms the view that philosopher kings are either ordinary political counsellors with no special qualifications for the job or vendors of solemn phrases which can be employed to make any policy look more or less respectable.

And now let me return to logical analysis:

"This beer is good" is superficially very much like "This beer is cold." Yet, even here the resemblance is only superficial since we test the truth of "This beer is cold" with a metrical device called a thermometer, but no similar procedure will do in the case of "This beer is good." However, we may persist and say "It is true that 'good' does not stand for an ordinary quality, but it must stand for a quality of some sort. Hence there must be a special kind of quality which I will call 'tertiary' or 'transcendental'; and there must be a special kind of observation which I shall call 'intuition' by means of which the presence or absence of good in beer, actions, legal systems, tragedies, and human beings can be detected."

So, you see, you only know that your beer is cold because the thermometer says so. If there is a dispute about it at The Black Boy, you just ask the waitress to bring a thermometer and watch her face. It might get colder even than your beer, and no nonsense about thermometers; for coldness in faces, unlike coldness in beer, can be told without a thermometer. . . . The fact that people knew when their beer was cold before the thermometer was invented seems to be beyond the powers or competence of logical analysis. What a thermometer measures is a physical property of matter which happens to be related to the sensation men call *cold*, which is as undefinable as the sense of what they call *good* (in beer). There is here a confusion on the meaning of words. The physical property, connected with the movements of the molecules of the liquid, commands the movement of the column of mercury in a way that can be expressed in a relatively simple mathematical equation. But the sensation of cold in our palates is by no means related to either term of such an equation by any relation known to science. There is roughly a parallel relation between the height of the mercury and the sensation of cold, so that the lower the mercury, the colder we feel the beer; but this parallelism is of the vaguest order, and occurs only within a short range of degrees of temperature; so that no ground exists for believing that the column of mercury is proportional to the sensation of cold even when the two move in a roughly parallel way. Moreover, no man can tell or express what really "feeling the beer colder" means, what it actually is, since it is absolutely original and ineffable; so that the column of mercury is roughly parallel to something we know nothing about. This bringing in of the thermometer is therefore an astonishingly unphilosophical thing to do for a professional philosopher.

Coldness of beer and goodness of beer are perceived in exactly the same way: by the body. That the perception of goodness is subtler than that of coldness is irrelevant. Both are primary and vital. And what goes for *good* in beer goes for *good* in all its senses, and for *just* and for *true*. What this book is blind about is that there are first values that man senses, feels, perceives, creates; in one word, lives naturally and universally. That some disciples of Plato saw them as mental transfigurations of geometrical bodies, that others saw them as gods, others as taboos, alters nothing to their permanency in the human spirit through time and space.

I have no doubt that the methods of logical analysis have their place in the arsenal of human thinking; nor can it be gainsaid that a good deal of nonsense could usefully be shaken down from the overgrown trees of political theories, and that logical analysis might conceivably turn out to be an excellent instrument for such a process. But the systematic use of it to demolish all the principles on which our collective life rests would appear to be both a waste of time and a dangerous venture. While discussing theories such as those of Hegel and Marx, this essay in logical analysis is at its happiest. But when there are no books to go by, we flounder in a mire of words. The eagerness to demolish principles leads to an anxiety to hold at something; and this something can be nothing but facts, understood as "observations of the most simple and elementary character." Unfortunately for empiricists, even the most elementary "facts" are loaded with ideas and unconscious axioms, so that the rejection of ideas because they do not rest on facts, forgetting that facts are but chunks artificially cut and isolated by the mind from the time-space continuum, can lead to little else but either error or verbiage.

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Much energy is thus spent in rejecting outright principles that are formulated badly; an energy which might have been devoted to give them a better form. Freedom is a case in point. "The natural challenge to it is 'free from what?'" I have heard that before, though in a slightly different form, during the bitter days that preceded the Spanish Civil War. Largo Caballero, a true, honest, lover of freedom, had his head turned by similar sophisms and went about the country asking: "Freedom? And for what?" It is the favourite slogan of Hitlers and Stalins. You don't tear off the horse's tail at one pull (because you can't); you tear it hair by hair. "We are not interested in freedom; only in freedoms"; say the empiricists. And the horses: "We are not interested in tails; only in hairs." And yet it would have been simple for a logical analyst to say: "Freedom is a natural tendency in every man, and a healthy one. It should be respected as much as is possible within the limits set to it by the requirements of others and by the safety of the community." There is something unseemly in a byzantine discussion on freedom-from and freedom-to when, beyond the Iron Curtain, no man can send his letters abroad without going in person to the post office with his letter open to be read by the censor; and desperate people risk their lives in order to go where men are free, without even enquiring whether they are free for or to or from.

What is the use of pointing out and easily dismissing errors once made about the theory and practice of liberty? What is wanted is a positive, up-to-date statement of freedom as the essential factor in civilised communities.

A SIMILAR negative prejudice afflicts the discussion of other liberal principles. Thus:

"All men are created free and equal" looks like a statement and "Men are always to be treated as ends and never as means" looks like the formulation of a rule. It is natural to suppose therefore that we have here fundamental rules from which others can be deduced. If this were so, "foundations" would be a suitable word for describing them. But it is not so. Nothing follows from these high abstractions, or if you like anything does. They are not concerned with actual people but with "real" or metaphysical ones. By themselves they tell us nothing whatever about how to deal with prisoners of war, criminals, or taxi-drivers. We can derive no actual law from them and appraise no actual law by means of them. That

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is what I mean by saying that as foundations they are useless. They do not and cannot do what they purport to do, that is, serve as axioms from which practical conclusions can be derived.

As usual, the statements criticised are badly formulated. "All men are created free and equal" is a mixed grill. "All men are equal" is an axiom, and no one can deny it. It does not mean that men are the same; nor that they play the same part on the stages of history, politics, or gossip; but it does mean that no man can claim to be above any other man, as a man. If this means nothing to the logical analyst, so much the worse for him.

That being so, there is no reason whatever why a man should claim the right to use another man as his instrument without the other man's consent. And therefore the second statement, thus qualified, stands also as an axiom.

Then, when we are told that these axioms tell us nothing whatever about how to deal with prisoners of war, criminals, or taxi-drivers, our answer is: You are wrong. They do. And you yourself admit it when you conclude: "It is pointless to invent an axiom that men ought always to be treated as ends in themselves in order to demonstrate the truth of 'It was wicked to send people to Belsen or Buchenwald,' for this is not the sort of statement which requires or admits of demonstration."

Now "It was wicked to send people to Belsen or Buchenwald" is supposed to be full of sense; and "Men should not be treated as means but as ends" is supposed to be a high abstraction. But unless "Belsen" and "Buchenwald" are symbols for mental and physical torture, and therefore "abstractions" parading as "facts," the phrase has no meaning. Hunger, thirst, lice, humiliations, torture are not bad in themselves. Anchorites, yogis inflict those things on each other with evident satisfaction. Volunteers have gone through torture in Cambridge laboratories to test the effect of pressure, heat, and cold on the human body, and no blame whatever was attached to the experimenter. But "Belsen" and "Buchenwald" were wicked because prisoners of war were treated there for similar experiments *without their consent.* Thus the principle is vindicated and the logical analyst is logicanalysed.

This obstinate dwelling on so-called facts is fatal to any understanding of natural forces. The analysis of England, for instance, never goes beyond notions applicable to the N.U.R. or the local cricket club. The notion of England as an organic unit similar to a flight of birds of the same species, with all that it implies of direct promptings and "ways" and behaviour in every Englishman, is absent altogether. England, we are told, or, at any rate, led to infer, is an association like the Tory party. Is it? When did the men of this island meet and decide to set up an association called England? And so we hear a lot about the state, but not a word about the nation.

How can such an attitude instil any sense in opinions on collective life? "What needs to be done"—we read—"is to explain the resemblances and differences between 'The political institutions of Switzerland are better than those of Spain' on the one hand and 'Smith is a better full-back than Jones' on the other. This, as may be seen by referring to my introduction, is a philosophical question. 'Are the political institutions of Switzerland better than those of Spain?' is not."

But who cannot see that the second question is concrete and the first woolly-headed. The dice are loaded from the outset. Even so, let us play. The statement: "The political institutions of Switzerland are better than those of Spain" is a rough way of saying that the system of collective life at present in vigour in Switzerland is better adapted to the peaceful life and evolution of the Swiss people than the corresponding system is to the peaceful life and evolution of the people of Spain. And this is a philosophical statement; and it can be proved by any reasonable man aware of the facts.

It is to be deplored that such a treatise should have appeared at such a time as ours. It can but confuse and befog the simpler sort of cultivated reader; the more so as in this book the opposition between East and West is nearly always presented as a symmetry. Some cases, by no means all, have been quoted. But, though it can be gathered here and there that the author is a "Westerner," something worse than mere symmetry steals in now and then: "It is not an accident that Statesmen from Solon to Stalin have commonly commanded respect and even veneration." Strange . . . isn't it? Why, when leaping over twenty-six centuries of history, the author should alight on Stalin and not on,

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say, Churchill or Roosevelt, is hard to see. Particularly as we might challenge such a fact-adept and ask him: "How do you know that Stalin ever commanded respect and even veneration? Facts, please. A gagged public opinion, an ever-present N.K.V.D., are these conditions to justify an opinion so positive about the respect and veneration which he is supposed to have enjoyed?"

After giving his reasons for thinking that Stalin was no mere politician, that he was a statesman, the author writes: "In fact it seems appropriate to talk about him in the same sort of language as we use in discussing Rembrandt or Beethoven." This is not bad for a language-conscious logical analyst. No wonder he adds: "This implies no liking for or even approval for his work. One may loathe Van Gogh but still regard him as a great artist and Milton's Satan is not a petty or contemptible character." Our only hope is that the author knows nothing about Russian conditions under Stalin.

All this is extremely disquieting. The present struggle is precisely one over the axioms and principles which this book seeks to brush aside. Two disasters threaten us: one is a war which would destroy us all; the other is the gradual conquest of world power by the Communists, which would destroy our freedom. The only defence against these two dangers is a tenacious stand on our principles; a refusal to barter away freedom anywhere. Tenacity of will and clearness of mind, with loyalty of both, are the indispensable weapons of the West. At this time of danger, there comes from an old and highly respected university a book preaching an indifferent subjectivism and a superior impartiality between East and West, though, of course, in favour of decency, don't you know? The publication of this book at this time can hardly be deemed a service to our learning, our freedom, or even our chances of survival.

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NATURE, SCIENCE, AND DR. KINSEY

It is gratifying to be able to report that the second volume of the Kinsey Reports, *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*,* which is now available in Great Britain, omits many of the more objectionable features of the first volume. There is no longer the ludicrous attempt to extrapolate, from a sample which is overwhelmingly college-educated, and confined to small urban areas of the north-eastern United States, to the whole population of that country, and by implication to the world; tables are analysed into means as well as medians, so that the "averages" are less misleadingly high; professional purveyors of sex (prostitutes and the like) are not lumped together with the amateurs, as they were with the males, so that in this way also the totals are less inflated; and cultural differences are given some acknowledgement by reference to some anthropologica studies. Dr. Kinsey has obviously profited by the minority criticisms levelled at some aspects

* *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female.* By Alfred C. Kinsey, Wardell B. Pomeroy, Clyde E. Martin and Paul H. Gebhard. W. B. Saunders Co. Ltd. 50s.

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of the first volume; and for a man who has received such adulation and uncritical acclaim to do so should count very greatly to his credit.

Although there is considerably less inflation of the reported incidence of sexual activity among American women than there was among American men, it is still not entirely absent; but, except in one instance, it does not appear particularly gross. Unless the chapter, with the relevant tables, on the pre-marital intercourse of American women is read with extreme care, a very distorted picture of American sexual morals is likely to be formed. Nearly half (48 per cent) of Dr. Kinsey's sample are reported as having intercourse before marriage, which suggests a remarkable degree of licentiousness in a mainly Protestant population; but one finds in a small paragraph on page 292 that just on half this number had only had intercourse with their fiancés, anticipating by a few days or weeks the legal ceremony. Certainly such behaviour can only be technically described as pre-marital intercourse; but this fact considerably alters the picture of sexual promiscuity which the gross figures give. Instead of the sensational statement that nearly half the female population engages in intercourse before marriage, we could have the much more sober statement that over three-quarters of the women in the sample were technical virgins until they slept with their husbands (legal or anticipatory). Apart from criticisms of this nature, Dr. Kinsey's presentation of his data in this volume is relatively unexceptionable, and occasionally informative.

Nevertheless, although the manifest content calls for less detailed criticism than did that of the first volume, the assumptions underlying the collection and presentation of the data are even more objectionable and unsatisfactory in the case of women than they were in the case of men; and much of the propaganda, masked as the *obiter dicta* of "science," calls for comment and analysis.

THE fundamental criticism which, to my mind, invalidates a remarkable amount of industry and perseverance, is that, by Dr. Kinsey's implicit standards, sex becomes a quite meaningless activity, save as a device for physical relaxation—something like a good sneeze, but involving the lower rather than the higher portions of the body. If "tensions" build up, one either takes a pinch of snuff or a mistress; it doesn't much matter which, and both are equally efficacious.

The concept of love is completely omitted from the analysis of sexual behaviour; the word does not even figure in the admirably full 31-page index. All "outlets," all orgasms, are treated as equal and interchangeable; no qualitative difference is considered or discussed. But surely, even on the grossest physiological level, there is considerable difference between an involuntary nocturnal dream and the consummation of love, between a few minutes' casual encounter and the nights of a honeymoon. Dr. Kinsey resolutely ignores all such distinctions; in the long (and interesting) chapters on the anatomy and physiology of sexual response and orgasm, orgasm is treated as though it were invariant, as though all orgasms were identical and total.

In the chapter on masturbation he writes:

> We have already noted that a variety of physiologic disturbances, including a considerable development of neuro-muscular tensions, are involved whenever there is sexual arousal. When the sexual response lead to orgasm, these tensions are suddenly released and the individual thereupon returns to a physiologically normal or subnormal state. . . . Then she may function more efficiently in her everyday affairs. . . . Most persons live more happily with themselves and with other persons if their sexual arousal, whenever it is of any magnitude, may be carried through to the point of orgasm.
>
> . . . We may assert that we have recognised exceedingly few cases, if indeed there have been any outside of a few psychotics, in which either physical or mental damage has resulted from masturbatory activity. We have, on the other hand, recognised a tremendous amount of damage which has been the result of worry over masturbation, and of attempts to abstain from such activity (pp. 166–168).

I do not, at the present moment, wish to dwell on the propaganda implicit in this quotation, but rather on the explicit assumption that masturbation is a completely adequate technique for relieving "tensions." Surely this is contrary to the experience of nearly any person of either sex who has had a moderately satisfactory love life.

The argument, presumably, for ignoring all questions of intensity in sexual experience, is that such chiefly subjective variables are difficult to elicit in fairly short, single, quick-fire interviews and too complicated to manipulate

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statistically. If such arguments are advanced, it seems to me rather a criticism of a method of research which cannot deal with the most highly valued aspects of the activity being investigated. The English-speaking peoples place a very high value on love, and reprobate a marriage based on any other considerations. Though many people do engage in sexual activities without love, to assume that the presence or absence of love is irrelevant is surely a grave departure from common sense.

Not only is sex, in Dr. Kinsey's presentation, as meaningless as a sneeze, it is also equally unproductive; after the equivalent of blowing the nose, that is the end of the matter. It seems almost incredible, but is nevertheless true, that gestation, birth, and nursing of children are completely ignored. Motherhood, for Dr. Kinsey, has no sort of connection with sex. In the tables on the behaviour of married women, we are told on all occasions the amount of their education, their age, and their relative religious devoutness; but not in a single table are we informed whether they be sterile or fertile, whether they have living children or no. Even from the sociological point of view, one would expect interesting and consistent differences in adultery and other post-marital carryings-on between the mothers and the childless. This variable is consistently ignored.

Quite a few of Dr. Kinsey's interviewees were more realistic than their interviewer:

> Something between 1 and 3 per cent of the females had dreamed that they were pregnant or that they were giving birth to a child. It is notable that these were reported as "sex dreams." . . . Such dreams need further consideration, because the connection between the reproductive function and erotic arousal is probably not as well established as biologists and psychologists ordinarily assume. By association, many males and apparently some females may become erotically aroused when they contemplate any reproductive or excretory function, probably because it depends at least in part on genital anatomy, and this may explain why some females consider dreams of pregnancy as sexual. It is more likely they consider their pregnancy dreams as sexual simply because they know, intellectually, that there is a relationship between sexual behavior and reproduction (p. 213).

Consider the implications of this passage! The link between intercourse and procreation is either purely intellectual, or else excretory!

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METHUEN

As they say in the disclaimers before some American novels: "any connection is purely coincidental." None of Dr. Kinsey's interviewers or senior assistants are women (technically a major error in the research set-up: one would have liked cross-sex and simili-sex interviews as a check on the type of material elicited in different interview situations); and although he is always having recourse to the animal kingdom to demonstrate that disapproved-of behaviour is "natural," it would seem that he has never observed the reproductory cycle of the larger mammals.

With domestic animals, such as kine, pigs, or dogs (not perhaps with the anthropoids), the behaviour of the males is fairly analogous to that of human beings; as far as one can judge from facial expressions and muscular movements, etc., particularly the rather fatuous slavering grin, their physical pleasure in intercourse is "almost human." But the same cannot be said of the œstrous female. She acts as if she were possessed of a devil, an intolerable itch, which drives her to almost any behaviour which might provide relief. Intercourse

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provides this relief, but not, judging by the same criteria, any sort of positive pleasure; she looks passive and bored, and would almost certainly eat an apple or read a newspaper if there were such a thing handy. The sow's or bitch's pleasure comes from suckling her young; in that situation you can observe the same rather fatuous but completely contented grin that the boar or dog wore during intercourse. "I have given suck and know How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me." In other contexts Dr. Kinsey stresses the diffuseness of the female's sexual response, the fact that the genitals are often only indirectly involved; but nothing connected with bearing children can be sexual, for then sex might be serious.

Incidentally, it seems at least hypothetically possible that there is some connection between the increase of non-marital sexuality (which Dr. Kinsey documents) in the "flaming twenties" and the very strong propaganda in the United States at that period against breast-feeding or any considerable display of maternal affection. This was the great period of "formulæ" in bottles administered on strict "schedules," and of banning the kissing and fondling of babies as "unhygienic" and undesirable, the hey-day of Watsonian behaviourism. Motherhood must have been almost a more unsatisfactory experience among the better educated Americans of that period than at any other place or time in human history; and this may have driven the unfortunate victims of "science" to search for substitute satisfactions. Dr. Kinsey's notions of psychology obviously stem from this period; he attempts to account for all sexual deviations by direct adolescent or adult "conditioning" (p. 645); and his philosophy is summed up in the simplest anti-religious materialism: "The same sort of misinterpretation has led to the dualistic distinction of mind and body to which many persons have been inclined. But form and function are co-ordinate qualities of any living cell, and of any more complex assemblage of living cells" (p. 642). It can be a matter of little surprise that the holder of such views quite consistently distorts, when he does not ignore, the views of psychiatrists and psychoanalysts.

As has been said, Dr. Kinsey is a great one for invoking the practice of "nature" to justify any type of behaviour not permitted by the States' legal codes in America, on the ground that they are part of man's "mammalian heritage." This leads to some quite comic passages, notably the pages (pp. 410–12) finding mammalian analogues to adultery (!), which is as "natural" as all get-out. In the earlier pages he writes:

> We shall find that a great many of the aspects of human sexual behavior, including many which various religious and cultural codes have considered the most abnormal, are, in actuality, basic to the whole mammalian stock" (p. 137).

And when he has covered most of the detailed data, he sums up:

> Psychologists and psychiatrists reflecting the mores of the culture in which they have been raised, have spent a good deal of time trying to explain the origins of homosexual activity; but considering the physiology of sexual response and the mammalian backgrounds of human behavior, it is not so difficult to explain why a human animal does a particular thing sexually. It is more difficult to explain why each and every individual is not involved in every type of sexual activity (p. 451).

It is difficult to deal with this appeal to "nature" seriously; from the moment man invented tools, preserved fire, and used language he was presumably acting "unnaturally," for he was doing things no other mammal had ever done; and the attempted regulation of sexual behaviour by laws, sanctions, or religion is certainly completely "unnatural," as "unnatural" as engaging in scientific research or publishing best-sellers. Dr. Kinsey apparently thinks it would be a Good Thing if everybody had lots and lots of sexual "outlets" (one of his rare evaluative adjectives occurs in the sentence: "As with the male, the [erotic] dreams often had a distressing way of stopping just short of the climax of the activity" (p. 196) and that is a perfectly tenable position; but to make propaganda for this viewpoint on the ground that "birds do it, bees do it, little squirrels in the trees do it" does not seem to show very great respect for what is a presumably educated audience.

In one respect, this appeal to the animals appears to be seriously misleading.

> The wide distribution of non-coital sex play among all of the mammalian species on which there are sufficient data is evidence of the ancient origins of the anatomic and physiologic bases of such behavior some millions of years ago in the ancestral stocks of the class Mammalia. . . . In a biologic sense,

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petting is a normal or natural sort of behavior and not the intellectually contrived perversion which it has sometimes been considered. In a biologic sense, the real perversion is the inhibition and suppression of such activities on the supposition that they represent "acts contrary to nature" (pp. 230–1).

If this means that infra-human mammals capable of coitus engage in sexual activities from which coitus is intentionally and completely excluded, I think it is simply nonsense. Adolescent male animals may engage in mounting rehearsals, often with inappropriate partners, until they have learned the proper techniques, and œstrous females will engage in all sorts of random behaviour to ease their intolerable itch; but I can find no evidence that adult animals in partial or complete freedom indulge in heterosexual non-coital sexual play, though bored specimens in zoos or laboratories may perhaps do so to eke out the monotony of an existence from which the food-quest, the major preoccupation of all wild mammals, is completely excluded. For the rest, I think much of Dr. Kinsey's interpretation of mammalian behaviour springs from the pathetic or anthropomorphic fallacy. Most mammals are very highly dependent on olfactory and gustatory cues as guides to behaviour; and much activity, which would have sexual implications if engaged in by humans, should almost certainly be regarded as research and analysis. Parenthetically, it is curious that, in his discussion of psychological sexual stimuli, Dr. Kinsey should have completely disregarded the sense of smell; there is a little laboratory, and quite a lot of anecdotal, evidence to show that men and women respond differentially to certain smells, and that for many women some smells are sexually stimulating. The numerous and costly advertisements of the perfume industry, especially in the U.S.A., harp on the suggestion that scent is aphrodisiac; it is likely that the chief purchasers of perfume are women, and they must presumably consider the advertisement claims as not improbable.

"Petting" would seem to be one of the rarest types of human sexual behaviour. For it to occur with any regularity a number of preconditions are necessary: the society must (i) postpone marriage for several years after the girls are nubile and (ii) at the same time place a high valuation on virginity at marriage, so that pre-marital intercourse has to be intermittent and furtive, and (iii) allow young men and women of marriageable age to associate without supervision. I know of no societies, other than those facing the Atlantic during the last fifty years or so, in which all these conditions operate simultaneously. It is, of course, perfectly legitimate for anybody to argue that "petting" is not harmful or is positively desirable; but if the chief arguments are derived from alleging that such behaviour is wide-spread among mammals or general in most human societies, one can only conclude that there is very little to be said for the practice.

As can be seen, Dr. Kinsey is not really either dispassionate or neutral (probably nobody dealing with human emotions and values could be); behind the "scientific" smoke-screen of statistical tables, graphs, codes, and rebarbative language there is a continuous progaganda for more, and more varied, sexual "outlets" as physiologically good in themselves. There is even the stupendous claim that

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taxonomic studies of behaviour should be the basis for laws:

> There cannot be sound clinical practice, or sound planning of sex laws, until we understand more adequately the mammalian origins of human sexual behavior, the anatomy and physiology of response, the sexual patterns of human cultures outside of our own, and the factors which shape the behavioral patterns of children and of adolescent youth. We cannot reach ultimate solutions for our problems until legislators and public opinion allow the investigator sufficient time to discover the bases of those problems (p. 8).

Note the arrogance of the phrase "ultimate solutions"! To show just how indefensible such pretensions are, let us for a moment consider another widespread mammalian instinct with many of the same physiological components as sex, aggression. Murder, the killing of members of one's own species, is common in some situations among many groups of mammals, is enjoined by many (head-hunting) cultures outside our own, and is found in nearly all societies. Similarly, robbery is a most wide-spread mammalian and human characteristic; cannot we have "sound planning of criminal laws" until the investigator has had sufficient time to present us with "ultimate solutions" of the desirability or undesirability of regulating murder or robbery?

All societies attempt to regulate the sexual behaviour of their members in the light of their over-riding values. Few societies (except perhaps our own) have such cruel, foolish and unenforceable laws as those current in the forty-eight states of the American Union; it would be highly desirable that such laws should be modified or repealed; but the only motives which are likely to make this happen are an increase in charity, courage, and understanding among the legislators and those who influence them; the demonstration that disapproved-of practices are more wide-spread than had been thought may well provoke savage panic rather than greater tolerance. (There have been some suggestions of this in England in the recent publicity about the number of police prosecutions for male homosexuality.)

It would be ungrateful to close this article without some reference to the new information I have gathered about women in general and American women in particular from *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female*. As far as American women are concerned, Dr. Kinsey demonstrates impressively that the active practice of religion is the greatest safeguard of female virtue, a fact which my own investigations confirm for England. He also gives support to the folk belief that those women who are chaste before marriage will be likely to be faithful thereafter, and conversely; or, if this statement sounds too moralistic for some readers, here is the same information in scientificese:

> Among the 514 females in the sample who had had extra-marital coitus up to the date on which they had contributed their histories, over 68 per cent had also had coitus before marriage. Since only 50 per cent of all the married females in the sample had had pre-marital coitus, it would appear that the pre-maritally experienced females were somewhat more inclined to accept coitus with males other than their husbands after marriage.
>
> To put it in another way, 29 per cent of the females with histories of pre-marital coitus had had extra-marital coitus by the time they contributed their histories to this study, but only 13 per cent of those who had not had pre-marital coital experience (p. 417).

It is interesting to note that among the college-educated American women who contributed their histories to Dr. Kinsey and his associates, the pattern of adultery is not a long-lasting liaison, but a short "romance" during a holiday or sea-voyage or similar brief encounter—just one of those things. For both sexes Dr. Kinsey's sample of the respectable working and lower middle classes is woefully inadequate; but it is interesting to note that the great differences in practice and in toleration of aberrant practices which he reported between low-educated and much-educated men seems to find no echo at all in his analysis of women's sexual behaviour; with the possible exception of the practice of female homosexuality, education (which is Dr. Kinsey's criterion for class differences, and, by and large, a fairly acceptable one for the U.S.A.) seems to make no difference to the sexual behaviour and attitudes of American women. There is an odd lack of "fit" here between the reports in the male and female volumes; and there is also a lack of "fit" between the amount of heterosexual experience, both in quantity and number of partners, claimed by men and admitted by women; observation suggests that male recourse to prostitutes does not account for the marked difference.

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Of Dr. Kinsey's generalisations on the sexual nature of women, two seem to me of particular interest. First, there is the demonstration that, as opposed to the sudden early peak and then continuous decline in the sexual capacities of males, women tend to rise slowly to a plateau round the age of thirty and then maintain a fairly even level for a considerable number of years, well past the menopause in most cases. This suggests that the pattern which was traditional among the French bourgeoisie (to what extent it was practised is another question) was the one which most completely fitted the physiological capacities of both sexes. In this pattern the young man, at the height of his sexual powers, has his early liaisons with women a generation older than himself ("*la femme de quarante ans*") also at the height of their powers; and when he becomes older, with lowered capacities, he takes as wife or mistress a young girl who has not nearly reached her maximum. Needless to say, such complementary relationships receive little approval in the United States.

Secondly, his chapter on Psychological Factors in Sexual Response shows that very few women respond in the way most men do to partial or symbolical references to sexual activity or potentialities. Women are rarely *voyeuses* or exhibitionists, get little or no pleasure or stimulation from the observation of nakedness or from erotic, pornographic, or obscene literature, art or conversation; "showing one's etchings" is an inefficient technique of seduction. Even in directly sexual situations, any interruption may destroy a woman's interest while the man's will be maintained. The differences elaborated in this chapter are of considerable interest.

I am too ignorant of anatomy and physiology to be able to comment on Dr. Kinsey's assertion that, with the exception of the ovaries and testes, male and female genitalia are exact homologues, and that orgasm is physiologically identical for both sexes. Dr. Kinsey shows that among women orgasm is certainly a learned response, requiring in most cases quite an amount of practice; some 90 per cent of his sample eventually achieve it. He has loosed the cat among the chickens with a vengeance by flatly denying that there are two types of female orgasm, which is one of the basic tenets of all psychoanalysts and most psychiatrists; it is up to these specialists to produce their

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counter-evidence. This does not seem the place to take up the question whether Dr. Kinsey is justified in treating orgasm as the sole criterion for satisfactory sexual experience in women; but it can be stated that there is quite a lot of evidence, chiefly from cultures other than Britain and the U.S.A., to the contrary.

Since Dr. Kinsey allows the minimal anatomic and physiological differences between men and women, he has to find some other source for the contrasts in sexual capacities and psychological responsiveness referred to above. In two chapters on neural mechanisms and hormonal factors in sexual response he suggests, somewhat tentatively, that the differences between the sexes may reside in the cortex and the pituitary gland; these are provocative suggestions, though I am unable to criticise them. Taken in all, the 200 pages of "Part III. Comparisons of Female and Male" are a useful and scholarly addition to our limited knowledge of sex; had they been published as scientific studies normally are published, without the ballyhoo worthy of the late Mr. Barnum, they would have merited, and doubtless received, considerable judicial praise. But by his practice of maximum publicity, Dr. Kinsey has moved his reports from the scientific to the social and even propagandistic level; and it is on that lower level that I have thought it useful to analyse them.

Geoffrey Gorer

A TOTEM OF THE 1920's

POPULAR fiction is a kind of folk myth, obliquely symptomatic of current social trends, as George Orwell demonstrated by contrasting *Raffles* (1900), on the one hand, with *No Orchids for Miss Blandish* (1939) on the other. "The worst books," he wrote in his essay on *Boys' Weeklies*, "are often the most important, because they are usually the ones that are read earliest in life," and, referring to the generation that grew up between the two world wars, he added: "It is probable that many people who would consider themselves extremely sophisticated and 'advanced' are actually carrying through life an imaginative background which they acquired in childhood from (for instance) Sapper and Ian Hay."

The truth of these observations may be illustrated by some examples from the work of Orwell's own contemporaries: W. H. Auden invokes, in the Litany from *Journal of an Airman*, the names of several heroes from boys' adventure stories (Dixon Hawke, Nelson Lee, Ferrers Locke); the burlesque super-villain in Christopher Isherwood's unpublished Mortmere stories, is called Reynard Moxon: and "Moxon Ivery" is the alias adopted by the German count posing as a pacifist intellectual in John Buchan's *Mr. Standfast*: while the secret-agent incident in *Mr. Norris Changes Trains* could have been written only by one thoroughly conversant with the spy-melodramas which it so cleverly parodies; the namesake of Graham Greene's *Third Man* was the leader of Edgar Wallace's *Fellowship of the Frog* (though in the latter case "Lime" is spelt with a "y"); and even Orwell himself was not entirely unaffected, since *1984*, despite its serious purpose, is cast in the basic form of the traditional thriller, with the most-unlikely-person revealed at last as a member of the secret police.

Mr. Richard Usborne mentions the passage from Orwell quoted above in the introduction to his "nostalgic study" * of the three romantic writers whose works, absorbed during the formative years of childhood and adolescence, helped (as he freely admits) to condition his attitude to adult life in the manner suggested by Orwell. His particular trio—though Sapper exercised a powerful influence—did not, however, include Ian Hay: its two other members were John Buchan and Dornford Yates.

At the age of forty-three, Mr. Usborne decided to re-read the novels and stories of these authors (a considerable task, since there are seventy-eight volumes all told), his object being partly to "retrace his steps in the favourite reading of his youth," partly to re-examine its remembered magic in the light of later experience. The result will be immensely diverting to those many readers who, in earlier days, shared the same literary tastes, though they may not necessarily agree with the views expressed by him in his entertaining survey.

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* *Clubland Heroes*. RICHARD USBORNE. Constable. 15s.

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THE author warns us that his approach is purely personal, his judgements highly subjective, belonging to "the Lower Criticism"; but, despite these modest disclaimers, *Clubland Heroes* contains much shrewd comment on the social climate of the period to which the works in question belonged: Mr. Usborne's scrutiny is all the more acute for being unclouded by political bias. His book consists of a general introduction and three parts: one devoted to each author, and subdivided into chapters dealing with the protagonists (Berry, Hannay, Bulldog Drummond, etc.) who recur most frequently in the various sagas; a final section treats with mock seriousness the fanciful conception of British espionage postulated by the "Secret Service" writers of the 1920's: ("Since authors must live between wars, so must their spies").

Mr. Usborne's trio had much in common: all were professional men who had seen war service. John Buchan (later Lord Tweedsmuir and Governor-General of Canada) had been a *Times* correspondent on the Western Front in 1915, a major in Intelligence a year later, and a colonel in 1917, when he was appointed a director of the newly-founded Ministry of Information. Sapper (Lt.-Col. Cyril McNeile) was a regular soldier who retired in 1919 and settled down to writing as a career. Dornford Yates (Major William Mercer) had, like Buchan, been called to the Bar and was President of the Union at Oxford: both he and Sapper were obviously much attached to their public-school backgrounds (Yates even dedicated a novel to Harrow). Although Buchan's initial adventure story, *The Half Hearted*, was published in the same year as *Raffles*, and the White Ladies group was introduced to magazine readers by Dornford Yates in 1911, Sapper's first volumes of short stories actually appeared during the war, and all three were essentially war-writers; long after the conflict was over, the atmosphere of the trenches pervaded the civilian lives of their characters, all of whom had distinguished themselves in battle and earned decorations for valour: Sapper awarded the D.S.O. and M.C. to Bulldog Drummond and the V.C. to Toby Sinclair; Yates gave Jonah Mansel and Boy Pleydell the D.S.O. and M.C. respectively; Richard Hannay and Archie Roylance both got the D.S.O. from Buchan, who also bestowed a posthumous V.C. upon Peter

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Pienaar, the wily old Afrikander, for his gallant death in action with the Royal Flying Corps.

These men were also great sportsmen in both senses of the word, famous at school for their prowess on the playing fields; as adults ("eternally 'fit'") they added climbing, hunting, shooting, and fishing to their list of accomplishments. Sapper's heroes held, perhaps, the best all-round records in these respects: Ronald Standish and Peter Darrell were scratch golfers as well, Jim Maitland and Bulldog Drummond ex-amateur-heavyweight boxing champions; though this distinction was shared by Yates' Jonathan Mansel, who put his skill to good use by killing a crook "with a single blow to the jaw": a feat soon duplicated by his devoted chronicler Chandos. (Drummond—equally expert in judo as with the Gloves—preferred to despatch enemies "with his bare hands," by a stranglehold taught him by "Osaki the Jap.")

One and all were elected by their authors to membership of West End clubs, which they used as bases for their confidential missions on behalf of the Old Country, and Mr. Usborne draws an adroit parallel between this way of life and the Public School system, pointing an analogy, also, between the prefects' code, by which corporal punishment may be arbitrarily inflicted with the sanction of the authorities, and the summary executions of criminals and subversive aliens carried out, with the unofficial connivance of Scotland Yard and the Ministries, by Drummond, Mansel, and their respective henchmen; it is more probable, however, that the theory of extra-judicial retribution derived originally from Edgar Wallace's *Four Just Men* (1905): though Jonah Mansel, actuated as a rule by talionic motives, is apt to conceal these beneath a show of moral indignation when passing sentence, and lacks, therefore, the cold impartial dignity of George Manfred in similar circumstances, while Leon Gonsalez would doubtless have been dismissed by Bulldog Drummond as a dago.

JOHN BUCHAN was the first of the three to enter the lists with a novel of international intrigue: *The Thirty Nine Steps* (1915). Until his advent, William Le Queux and E. Phillips Oppenheim had this literary field more or less to themselves; theirs was a less realistic convention, stiff and formalised in manner: the crackle of starched shirts could be heard between the sentences as suave diplomats skirmished with barbed politeness over dinner-tables in cosmopolitan restaurants or in "the chancelleries of Europe." Buchan's swifter pace and colloquial style, containing homely echoes of *King Solomon's Mines* and *Allan Quatermain*, was to alter all that.

Meanwhile Dornford Yates had already published his first collection of squirearchal tales featuring the Pleydell family, while Sapper's army stories (not dissimilar in subject-matter and *dramatis personæ*—the glasshouse boy who atoned by dying bravely on the battlefield, the "gentleman-ranker," the tough Hibernian sergeant, etc.—from those written during the more recent war by Gerald Kersh) were well received by critics of the day: "'Sapper's' books will live for generations, and will take their place with the classic literature of the war."—*British Weekly*; "As good as Kipling's early tales."—*James Douglas*; "There is a touch of genius, and more than a touch, in 'Sapper'."—*Sir W. Robertson Nicoll.* (These notices, re-read today, may give rise to reflection on the exaggerated and ephemeral nature of reviewers' praise, especially at the present time, when personal narratives of military and maritime adventure, issued *en masse* by publishers in response to a sudden public craze, are being acclaimed in the press with eulogistic tributes out of all proportion to their literary merit.)

Mr. Usborne draws attention, also, to Sapper's novel *Mufti*, published in 1919 (two years before the appearance of Bulldog Drummond), in which, though incipient democratic sympathies are expressed "and the social problems of war discussed without dogmatism," the young author was at the same time evolving his grotesque conception of the officer-type as representative of a master-race recruited solely from the leisure-class and endemic to English shores: "Of such was The Breed." This doctrinaire ideal, personified by the egregious monocled figure of Jim Maitland, became gradually responsible for the obsessional insularity, sadistic overtones, and explicit anti-Semitism which Mr. Usborne rightly deplores in his later work.

SIMILAR traits recur to a lesser degree in the characters and situations created by Dornford Yates, but here Mr. Usborne, who openly

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acknowledges his preference for this author's work, is less willing to view them with disfavour. In fact, where the Berry books are concerned, he is quick to anticipate criticism before any has been offered, extolling them as "a considerable achievement in light literature" and even suggesting, at one point, a comparison with Trollope. He analyses the "choriambic rhythm" and "attractive archaism" of the "unusually studied" style:

> There are frequent moments in both his types of books when Yates calls for silence, and then, in perfect phalanx, wheels his sentences into the Dorian mood. He is writing for special attention, and with special care.

This solemn assessment of what is obvious tushery, judging by the passage appended as a sample of the so-called "diamanté prose," would on the face of it seem preposterous, yet, as an epigraph to the section, Mr. Usborne quotes from a review by Cyril Connolly, in which the latter professes his admiration for Dornford Yates, postulates the existence of a cabalistic fan-club meeting "at great garden parties, literary luncheons, or in the quiet of an exclusive gunroom," and concludes by praising the author for "fine writing" and "a wit that is ageless united to a courtesy that is extinct."

This review was printed by *The New Statesman* in 1935; and, though Mr. Connolly may have conceivably altered his views since then, the invocation of so distinguished a critic in support of Mr. Usborne's claims seems to call for a more careful consideration of the work at issue. One finds little trace, nevertheless, of the qualities ascribed: especially that of ageless wit; Berry himself is a pompous, dogmatic buffoon, both his outbursts of rhetorical acerbity and his self-styled "monographs" being couched in ponderous circumlocutions of a type frequently parodied by Patrick Hamilton ("I am about to contribute to this heterogeneous volume a little dissertation of indisputable value." "If I may make bold to borrow Shakespeare's deathless words," etc.): though to call one's wife a venomous shrew and to suggest, even in jest, that she is verminous, denotes undeniably a courtesy which is extinct. Fine writing also eludes the most diligent seeker; two passages from *Perishable Goods*, one descriptive, one of dialogue, might be said, on the other hand to display its antithesis:

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I do not believe in Enchantment: but, if there be such a thing, it stood at my shoulder that evening upon the ramparts of Gath. Castle, spur and thicket, mountains and forests and the flash of the water below seemed all "such stuff as dreams are made on," and I could not shake off the feeling that we were about to quit a fantastic country which, search for it as we might, we should never see again.

"I love you," he said. "I love the stars in your eyes and the breath of your lips. I love your hair and your temples and the pride of your exquisite mouth. I love all your peerless beauty. But, most of all, my queen, I love your darling nature and the finest, bravest heart that ever closed a book at the end of one golden chapter—and put it back on the shelf."

But, as Boy Pleydell truthfully observes in *As Berry and I were saying*: "If you can write, you can: if you can't write, you can't—and you never will be able to . . . no one can ever teach a person, who can't write, to write and no one, other than himself, can ever teach a person, who can write, to write well."

MR. USBORNE is less biased in favour of Buchan: in fact, while stating, correctly, that he was the best writer, storyteller, and craftsman of the three, he quite unfairly asserts that the creator of Sandy Arbuthnot, John S. Blenkiron, Haraldsen, and the boy Peter John Hannay (to say nothing of Ivery, Colonel Stumm, Hilda von Einem, and Dominick Medina, on the opposition benches) failed in character-drawing. However, any disagreement with the views expressed in *Clubland Heroes* must be a purely personal matter, for each reader will have his own particular preferences among the authors it examines; perhaps the passages dealing with the heroines of the period (the open-air types, the "topping girls") are among the happiest in the book: here Mr. Usborne's wryly ironical manner extracts the utmost fun from the material at his disposal. He is weakest in the middle section and, though his textual knowledge of the books concerned is elsewhere encyclopædic, it is possible to catch him out on several minor points where the Hannay books are concerned; a list of errors is appended below, for correction in future editions, of which we hope there will be many.

Archie Roylance did not join Hannay and Arbuthnot (then Lord Clanroyden) on their expedition to *The Island of Sheep*: Lombard, a former companion of Sir Richard's bushveld days was the third man on that occasion. Lord Artinswell retired from the Foreign Office in the early nineteen-twenties and was not, therefore, the Head Man fifteen years later (unless he was recalled to duty after the Medina affair in which he did not plan counter-measures, but took only an onlooker's part); nor did the Graf von Schwabing (Moxon Ivery) appear anywhere in *The Three Hostages*; while Clanroyden's Christian names were not Alexander Ludovick, but Ludovick Gustavus: though he once called himself Alexander Thomson whilst posing as a dramatic critic on holiday. (Sandy—not one of Mr. Usborne's favourites—was incidentally the only character created by any of the three authors who would have attended a Bloomsbury party, unwashed, wearing a black sweater, and furnished with "all the latest Paris studio argot," but there is some excuse for these lapses from the accepted standards of his "totem": for he was disguised, at the time, as a "Surréaliste.").

J. Maclaren-Ross

About our Authors

J. R. Ackerley is the literary editor of *The Listener* and author of *Hindu Holiday*. . . . Robert Warshow is on the staff of the American monthly, *Commentary*. His long-awaited book on American films will be published early next year. . . . Colin Clark's essay is based on the 11th Montague Burton Lecture, which he delivered at the University of Leeds. . . . Deben Bhattacharya, formerly on the staff of the Indian section of the BBC, is at present in India where he is making recordings of Indian music. . . . The distinguished Polish painter, Joseph Czapski, is now living in Paris. . . . Leslie A. Fiedler's article grew out of a forum on "Anti-Americanism in Europe," which was held recently in New York under the auspices of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom. Among those who took part were Lionel Trilling, V. S. Pritchett, Austin Albu, M.P., Robert Gorham Davis, William Deedes, M.P., Henri Peyre, Max Salvadori, and others.

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